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REMINISCENCES

OF

FESTUS C. CURRIER

1900

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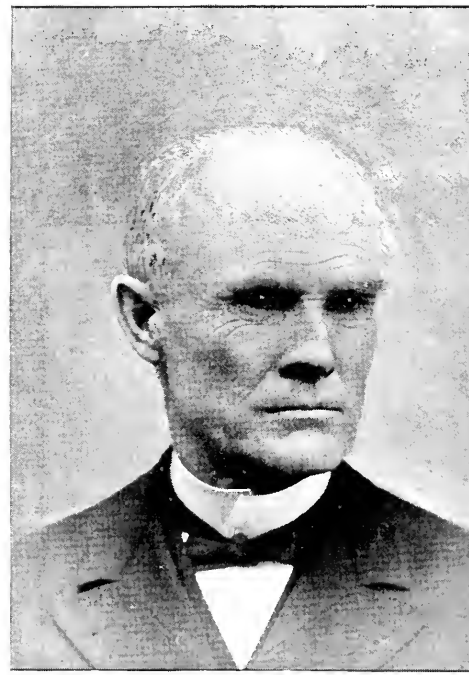

F. C. Currier

REMINISCENCES

OF

FESTUS C. CURRIER

Born at Holliston, Mass.,
October 6, 1825.

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REMINISCENCES.

CHAPTER I.

STAGE COACHES IN 1830. — PRESIDENT JACKSON'S VISIT TO BOSTON. — MAINE LAND SPECULATION.

The request of personal friends that I write up some reminiscences of political affairs and men prominent in the same, and of other matters of note occurring since my early manhood, is considered with much hesitation, realizing lack of ability for such an effort—and not having kept a diary of events through this long time, I must rely on memory for the needed materials. This seemed to me sufficient reason why I should not attempt it, but as they seem to think I can write up something of interest from my life experience, I will do what I can in this line.

My first recollections go back to about 1830, or near that time, when as a very small boy I distinctly remember the interest and delight I took in seeing the stage coaches with their fine looking horses as they went by my home, with the driver on the box with his long whip in hand. I looked on him as a pretty big man, none then, in my conception, any bigger. It was the only attraction in my native village for us boys, and we took it all in and scanned it very closely, and I remember with what awe and wonder I beheld the Great New York and Boston Line of

coaches that for a short time went through our village, an express line going at a rapid rate, most of the time with six horses to a coach; they were of the largest size and could carry a considerable number of passengers and baggage. They used to get along through our place about sunrise from New York, and I could hear them coming quite a while before they came in sight, so I was out to see them. These great teams heavily laden going along at such rapid rate made considerable noise and generally attracted the attention of the people.

This was thought in those days to be a pretty big thing, and it was, as nothing greater, up to that time, in the way of transportation had ever been seen. The next event I remember was in 1833, when I had the opportunity to see that renowned warrior and statesman, Andrew Jackson, president of the United States, when he came to Boston. My father, an ardent Jackson man, who, no doubt, thought him the greatest man of his day, took this opportunity to see him, and also seemed to think he had a couple of boys who wanted to see him, so, with my older brother, I went to Boston, a distance of twenty-five miles from our home, in his wagon. (No railroads entered Boston at that time.) Starting before sunrise on a fine clear morning in the month of June, we were about four hours on the way. The road was filled with teams and coaches full of people, en route for the same place we had in view.

On Boston Common, as we entered, the crowd was immense and wild with enthusiasm and excitement. When the barouche containing the president came in sight at the entrance on Boylston

street a shout went up that might have been heard miles away, aided by the thunders of artillery fired near by, making the whole scene most terrific. Such a reception was never given any man on Boston Common before or since—at least, I do not believe there ever was. I have in my time seen many such occasions in Boston, but never one that came up to this.

When the president's carriage came near where we stood, my father led us quite near—only a few feet away—so that a close view was obtained. Tall, erect, spare, a sharp, penetrating eye, gray hair, standing up like bristles, a commanding presence—his very appearance seemed to describe the manner of man he was.

The people went wild over the scene and were only restrained by the guard of soldiers around the carriage from blocking its passage. When an old soldier was presented, the president cordially shook his hand. Notwithstanding my youth, being eight years old, this scene has never been effaced from my memory, and for this great opportunity to view this, to my mind the most remarkable man ever produced in this country, I shall ever feel grateful to my father.

Boston has never failed to accord to every president coming within her limits due respect and cordial reception, always generous and lavish in every particular; and so throughout Massachusetts and all New England, Jackson was everywhere received with great enthusiasm and affection. The special reason of this ardent feeling was the fact that he had just brought South Carolina to terms in her nullification business, which to his political oppo-

nents, did much to soften the animosities created by his course relating to the re-charter of the United States bank, as here and in all New England the failure to do this was looked upon as a terrible thing for the country. But in this matter time has rendered judgment in his favor.

Members of his cabinet were with him—Martin Van Buren, Levi Woodbury, father of the late Charles Levi Woodbury of Boston, and others; but I have no recollection of having noticed any of them. On the following day he went by invitation of the authorities of Harvard college to Cambridge, accompanied by his ministers, escorted by the "military," the governor and staff, United States and state officers. He was offered the opportunity to ride horseback, which he accepted. This was a notable feature and attracted much attention, as he was a superb horseman. Also it was said that Mr. Van Buren joined him in riding the same way. I did not see this part, but remember the talk made about it from those who were present and heard it read from the papers, which gave full details of what occurred.

In coming into New England he traveled by special coaches, his cabinet with him. There was no railroad in this part of the country, so he was obliged to come in that rather slow way. But he had, by this mode of travel, a good opportunity to meet the plain people in the villages and towns, on the farm and in public places, being everywhere received with great enthusiasm and veneration from all classes of people. I remember well the talk made at my home about this great event, and no occurrence relating to it failed of notice.

He had just entered upon his second term of office, after a very exciting contest. His course concerning the bank had created a tremendous opposition to him and the election was to be his downfall or his vindication. The campaign of 1832 was, no doubt, the most personal and vindictive contest ever fought in this country, and created very much ill-feeling and animosity as between parties and among the people in general. It was a long time before its effects died out. Probably no man anywhere before the people for public office was ever so maligned and abused as Jackson; but he triumphed and received a strong endorsement from the people. This fact did very much to increase his popularity, gave his friends much gratification and lent a glorification for him on his journey, exceeding in intensity that of any other of the great men or heroes of his time or since—no doubt, due in some degree to the violence of his enemies in the public press and otherwise.

His second administration, like his first, was one of turmoil and political antagonism, which continued throughout to his successor. The fight with the bank, which he had refused a recharter, affected business seriously, and produced much political excitement throughout the country. But the Jackson or Democratic party, through Jackson's great influence, was enabled to elect his successor, Mr. Van Buren, who carried out the Jackson policy, and in consequence met with great and violent opposition everywhere. His administration was turbulent from beginning to end. The very hard times of this period so impressed it on my mind that it is not forgotten. Nothing within my

remembrance ever equalled it in severity. The suspension of specie payments, and the stoppage of bank accommodation to business men, put a stop to business everywhere, largely in consequence of the failure to re-charter the United States bank.

About this time occurred the great financial disasters owing to the great Eastern land speculation, which had raged for a year or more, affecting all New England more or less, in this state reaching almost every town of any size. This land was located in the northern part of Maine, from Bangor to Moosehead lake, covering a large tract of heavily wooded country, with but few inhabitants located anywhere on the tract. Bangor was then a small place, with few inhabitants, mostly lumbermen interested in this great lumber district.

The state originally owned all these lands and caused a survey to be made, which resulted in maps showing the sections, as the whole was divided up, marked and numbered, stating the number of acres in each. These maps were official and were deposited in the State house at Augusta. The sections, as shown on these maps, were the objects of this great speculation. Copies were drawn, or supposed to be drawn, from these maps; but as it turned out, many of these copies were frauds, and no such land existed anywhere as represented by them.

The great value in these lands was the timber standing thereon, immense, in fact almost limitless in quantities. Since that time this timber has been cut, and the lumber from it carried to all parts of the country and the world, as the navigable rivers, from the sea coast up into this country made it easy

of ingress and egress for vessels of large size and tonnage in the transportation of the great product of these lands.

This for a time brought great prosperity and wealth to Maine, but the speculation in the land resulted profitably to those only who got out early. To the majority it brought ruin and disaster. Boston was the chief headquarters of this business, and the prepared copies of the original survey were hung up in every broker's office and in public places, and great placards were everywhere posted, proclaiming the great value of this country—not only its great timber wealth, but its value for agricultural purposes. Then it was made a strong point in their favor that they were very accessible through the great rivers flowing through the same. Great advertisements in the weekly newspapers perhaps helped on this fraud, and many in the rural districts in this state and in New England were led into it through this means.

I remember this matter distinctly from the fact that my father was in it—how much I never knew, but he was interested with others in Boston, and was employed by a syndicate to go down into this country to view the lands and get a knowledge of their location and probable value. This, I think, was in the winter of '36 or '37. I have nothing by which to fix the exact date of his trip, but I remember it was in the winter, as when he came home he brought with him a pair of snow shoes, something of a curiosity to me. These shoes remained in an old store room in my father's residence for a number of years, but what became of them I am unable to state. They were rather clumsy-looking, about 15 to 17

inches long, four or five inches broad, and made in the shape of sled runners of hard wood, so that the foot would set down into the frame and could be easily strapped to it.

On his return from this trip into the wilds of Maine, he related, in my presence, his experience. I remember it well, although I was only 10 years old. There were no railroads and the rivers were all frozen up, so that overland by stage he got to Bangor, there securing the necessary guides and outfit for the wilderness. The snow was very deep—five to six feet on an average—making snow shoes necessary. But few inhabitants were found, and only stations or cabins of hunters were open for travelers who might be going through the country. The result of his trip was to find that the maps they carried did not show the land as represented, and in some places the land sold was located under large lakes and ponds, showing the great swindle that was being carried on in this speculation.

Probably never before or since has such a reckless and fraudulent speculative business been carried on, and probably a greater number of well-to-do men were caught and ruined, than ever before in the business experience of this country. This and the bank troubles had a terrible effect on the people, and carried distress everywhere into their homes. Factories, workshops and mills of every class closed their doors, shutting out any chance for employment. Want and destitution prevailed on every hand, and much suffering was the result. The people were not in a happy frame of mind. Political controversy ran high, and angry discussions over the situation were heard in public places,

on the corners of the streets, in stores and taverns and in the home. Churches were rent in twain; society divided into political camps; neighbors living near each other were not on friendly terms; men met together in town meeting to transact town business, were divided strictly on party grounds, and the strongest prevailed without much regard to the minority. No Democrat was invited or expected to attend a social gathering of Whig families, and, on the other hand, no Whig would be found at the house of his Democratic neighbor.

This was the state of affairs as they existed in 1837, 1838, 1839, in my native town, and it was generally the case all over New England. Women were equally excited with the men and took sides with their husbands. This was the cause of the political revolution of 1840, which removed the Jackson-Van Buren party from power.

CHAPTER II.

EARLY TRIALS OF STEAM RAILROADS.—SALE OF LIQUOR.—GOVERNOR ELECTED BY ONE MAJORITY.—THE "STRIPED PIG."

Within the decade from 1830 to 1840, the introduction of railroads, operated by steam, into this state, was successfully completed, and some important lines were built and placed in successful operation.

The road from Boston to Providence, R. I., was completed; the Boston & Worcester followed next. This road was built as far as Westboro late in 1834. When it got up as far as the town of Hopkinton (now Ashland), the town authorities, with citizens of the village, got up a celebration to publicly receive the first train, and give it due recognition, such as this important event demanded.

Up to this time hardly any one in the country had ever seen a railway train. Therefore it was a great novelty. The people came from all the surrounding towns to see this most wonderful sight, the first railway train ever run in this part of the state.

I went with my father and older brother to this place, a distance of about five miles, to see this remarkable show—an experiment, as it was then called, and many thought it only an experiment, and doubted its success. It was frequently remarked within my hearing that day, that it would never amount to much, and doubts were

everywhere prevalent regarding its permanent success. Capitalists hesitated to invest in the stock, or to render aid or encouragement to an enterprise so doubtful. This was the case throughout the state, and the progress of the great improvement was somewhat slow.

There was no telegraphic communication at this date, and the telephone was an undiscovered secret. To find out where the train was, and how soon it might be expected, it was arranged that a cannon should be placed on a hill just below the village, which cut off the view in the direction of the approaching train. From the top of this hill was a long stretch of open country, extending almost to South Framingham, so that the gunner could see the train quite a distance.

When the train came in sight, they were to announce the fact by firing this gun. When this was heard, a few moments elapsed. Then the expected train put in an appearance, receiving loud plaudits from the large crowd, said to contain at least eight thousand people. A band of music was provided and added much to the interest of the occasion; also a military company was in attendance.

We have often seen in print, pictures of these original trains of cars and the engines. They have also been seen in some of the industrial exhibitions of the country, illustrating the great improvements made since.

The engine was rated at about six tons, with no cover for the engineer or fireman. They stood on a platform, similar to those now in use, next to the tender. This carried the wood for fuel and a large tank for water, which looked like a large hogshead or pipe,

with a number of buckets or pails hanging upon it, to be used in replenishing the supply of water.

When the train came along where we stood, the escape of the steam and the shutting off of the same, together with the action of the brakemen on each car in stopping the train, made so much of a racket that the crowd, who stood pretty close to the track, began to scatter, from fear of what the thing might do to them.

There were four or five cars, all of the short coach pattern, with a brakeman on each, sitting on a seat similar to the box on a stage coach. There was no station building or platform, except a small temporary one.

The cars were filled, I suppose, with stockholders and their friends, and some were on top. When all had alighted, the crowd made a rush to get into the cars, and they filled them inside and out. With this crowd on board, the train backed down to a bridge over a stream of water, running a short distance below. With the engine standing on this bridge, the tank was replenished by the use of the buckets from the water below. There was no other facilities for supplying this necessity.

This was a sample of railroading in those days, and it took some time for people to get acquainted with it and ride on it. Stage coaches did not readily give way to this new mode of travel, but continued all the way from Boston to Worcester to run, until the loss of the government mails and patronage compelled them to stop. This was the case everywhere else. The stage coach went out of use very reluctantly, as a large amount of capital was invested in them. A great many men employed in

running them found themselves out of business, and were, of course, the chief opponents of the new system. There were the farmers, who said the market for horses, hay and grain, would be ruined. They felt badly over it and complained much.

This was the situation at this time, and years passed before the Boston & Worcester railroad was a paying investment. In fact, for some time the stock was valueless.

The first time I rode on the road was in going to Boston. I went in one of these coaches with doors in the side. I remember they did not ride quite as comfortable as the cars of the present day. About ten miles an hour was said to be the running time, but the car was far from comfortable to ride in, the road uneven and rough; so that my first experience on the track was not favorable. But it was an improvement on the stage coach, and soon became the chief mode of travel.

Some of the difficulties met with in starting and putting into operation this railroad were told me a few years ago by one of its original conductors, whom I remember on the road from its start, and who retained this position nearly up to the union of the road with the Western railroad into the Boston & Albany, as it now is. He ran the first passenger train from Boston to Worcester on the completion of the road, and so was there at the start and was well informed about all the ins and outs of the road.

The first winter after the road went into operation was very severe and a good deal of snow fell, which was a great obstruction to the road. They had no appliances for removing snow,

except the common shovel, and to employ the number of men necessary to clear the track would require a large outlay of money. This they did not have, as the road had not done much business and its revenues were small. So the directors decided not to try to clear the road, and put their engines and cars into their store-houses and stopped business. This gave the stage owners great courage, and they used it for all it was worth as against the road. The stoppage of the trains and the clamor everywhere heard, had an unfavorable effect on the directors and stockholders, and they began to express themselves as though their property was not of much value, and doubted whether they could long continue the operation of the road. As this gentleman told me, the board of directors finally held a meeting to decide what should be done with the property. After much discussion one of the board, who appeared to have more confidence than the others—David Henshaw, then collector of the port of Boston and a resident of Leicester in this county—rose and declared in very decided language that the road should not stop, but should start, and when started should not again stop. This appeared to have its effect, for the trains were put on soon after and have never since ceased to run.

Another incident connected with the stoppage of the trains, as he told me, was the fact that he, with the other conductor—there were but two of these at this time—proposed to the directors to put the trains on again and run them for what they could get out of it, but the offer was not accepted.

I well remember that these two con-

ductors were both fine looking men and that they always appeared on duty dressed in the height of fashion, wearing shining silk tile hats of the latest pattern, that being before the days of uniforms for railroad employes.

There were other obstacles in the way. They had no system of signals, as none had then been invented. They had no means of finding out where on the road a train might be, if it failed to pnt in an appearance at the stated time. Only two passenger trains were run and a local freight. Each passenger train started at the same time, one leaving Boston as the other left Worcester. Only a single track was laid, and served the company for many years for all the business transported over it. These trains were to meet and pass each other at South Framingham, and this arrangement was not changed until the second track was laid. To meet this difficulty a relay of horses was posted all along the line from Boston to Worcester, five miles apart. In case of accident or delay, these horses were used to find the train and report back to the other train where it was. This was an expensive scheme, but had to be employed.

This whole story goes to show how feeble was the starting of this great enterprise, and how little its possibilities were then understood, how reluctantly capital came to its aid, and how the public failed to appreciate it, or patronize it for some time after its beginning. A few men of recognized ability and character, with many doubts, but having perseverance, pushed it forward to success, as we all know, the most valuable and best paying property in this country, the Boston & Albany railroad.

About this time there occurred some political changes in this old Commonwealth worthy of note. The temperance question was assuming considerable importance and the good people were getting stirred up over the apparent increase in drunkenness and dissipation. Up to now the taverns everywhere, and they were found in every town, no matter how small, and in large places a number of them, had open bars for the sale of alcoholic drinks, being licensed as innholders, which included the sale of liquor, by the county commissioners, so that towns had no control over the matter. I remember very well the old tavern in my native town, with its well-regulated bar, large and handsome decanters of glass arranged on shelves in the rear of this bar, and the tumblers and other fixings of a bar-room with a large wood stove (no coal was in use outside of Boston then) in the middle of the room, with chairs around it to accommodate the travelers who happened to come along and townspeople who regularly came in to drink their "flip" and talk over political affairs and the latest news. This was then the condition of every town in New England and, no doubt, throughout the country.

The tavern-keeper was generally the leading man in town, and one of its chief officers, justice of the peace and frequently postmaster. This was the case in my town, and it falling to my lot to go for the mail, I had frequent opportunity to observe the business of the place, so that the impressions gathered then are pretty well fixed in my mind. All classes of people were there, and appeared to partake freely. The wonder in my mind now is that more

drunkenness did not prevail, but there was enough of it, particularly on militia training days and other public occasions.

The legislature, previous to this time, 1838, had passed laws to restrain the sale of liquor in some, but not in an effective degree. The sale at the taverns went right on. Public opinion seemed to be against the enforcement of the law and, therefore, it did not stop the business. The legislature of this year passed a law known as the "fifteen gallon" law, restricting the sale of strong alcoholic liquors, (neither beer nor cider was included), to not less than this number of gallons. To enforce this law would cut off the taverns. They could not deal out to any one less than this quantity, under a penalty of $100 fine for each violation of the law. This, of course, raised a storm, and the landlord, being the chief man of the town, had great influence over the common people and stirred them up everywhere against the injustice of the law, telling them their rights were invaded and they must not submit to it. The stage owners and drivers were a pretty numerous class in those days, and the teamsters on the road were everywhere seen. All these people were loud against this infraction of their rights and privileges. So they and the tavern-keepers, with their opportunity among the people, had great influence against the enforcement of the law, and it was found very difficult to get a verdict against any violator thereof. The juries were very generally prejudiced against the law, so that on the merest quibble they would acquit outright or fail to agree. Therefore but few convictions were obtained. Still, the sheriffs and constables were

obliged to take notice of all violations occurring before their eyes, and bring the offenders into court. This produced great excitement, and of course made it a political question. The party in power made the law, and was therefore responsible for it. In the campaign of 1839 this was the great and sole issue. The National Republicans, as then called, later Whigs, were in power, and had been for quite a number of years. Edward Everett was governor and honored the office as an eminent citizen and statesman, whose services in this state and nation in later and more troublous times, were of great importance to the welfare of the country and placed him in the forefront of the great men of his native land.

He had in previous elections been elected by large majorities, and he was a candidate for re-election. The Democrats, having been long in the minority in the state, had not been able to elect a governor. They were made up as an organization of the common people, the farmers, the working-people of all classes, the stage drivers and tavern-keepers, all pretty free thinkers and liberal in their opinions. They were of course averse to any legislation which infringed on what they considered to be their rights. So they were against the liquor laws, as the party has in later times been, more or less. The enforcement of these obnoxious laws brought to their aid, as against the party in power, many of their opponents, who did not want to be deprived of the privilege of getting their drink as had been the case previous to this legislation; so that the opposition appeared formidable, and the Democrats took courage and made their nomination for

governor with some show of success. Their nominee was Marcus Morton of Taunton, who for fourteen years consecutively had headed their ticket, but every year failed of an election by a large adverse vote. He was a well known citizen of high standing, character and ability. He was a judge of the supreme court and had served in both branches of the legislature at various times. Therefore, there was no question raised as to his ability to suitably fill the office of governor.

The canvass was very exciting and I well remember the efforts put forth by stage drivers and teamsters on the road, throwing plenty of campaign material broadcast and attaching to their teams large placards—in fact, they were in earnest and determined to reclaim their lost right of the purchase of drinks without hindrance from any source. This was the prevalent feeling and expression, and the result of their efforts gave them the victory but by a very narrow margin. It was so close that some two or three weeks was required to determine who was elected. It must be understood that election returns did not get in as soon then as now. But the delay in this case arose from the fact, as it appeared in the returns, that Judge Morton had succeeded by a majority of one vote over all his competitors, as the law at that time required. No one could be elected to any office whatever in this state unless he received one more vote than all others receiving votes added together in one sum; so that a clear majority was needed to effect an election.

The candidate for lieutenant-governor on Judge Morton's ticket failed of an election, his opponent being elected at

the polls. This result produced great excitement and rejoicings on the part of the victors. They had for the first time, after many years of defeat, elected a governor. Therefore, as might be expected, they went wild over their success. They also secured a majority in the legislature sufficient to repeal the obnoxious law. Thus the fifteen gallon act was killed. While this law was in force many ways were adopted to get around it and supply the ardent in smaller quantities than the law permitted. One which was published everywhere in the country and caused considerable merriment was known as the "striped pig."

It first appeared at a militia muster in Dedham in the fall of 1839. A large tent was set up on the ground, displaying a good-sized pig on canvas, covered over with stripes, represented as a veritable striped pig. To be admitted to view this wonderful curiosity cost six cents. This small charge brought a large patronage and many went in to see the show. This was related to me at the time by a man in my town who went there and went in with the multitude.

This animal was a good-sized pig, covered with stripes, and as an accompaniment—and as another part of the entertainment—was a free counter with plenty of liquor of various kinds, mostly New England rum, for the thirsty, so that as often as one was dry he need only pay the admittance fee to quench his thirst. How long they were able to carry on this business that day I am not able to state, but I am not aware of any other similar performance anywhere else. This produced much talk and was published in the papers with a picture of the tent as it appeared on

this occasion. This circumstance being so largely published, did much to bring the liquor laws into contempt. The temperance people were not discouraged over these failures, but continued the agitation, and through it created a public sentiment more favorable to the restriction of the sale of intoxicating liquors. As we all realize now, the sale of spirituous liquors is held in strong restraint, with public sentiment strongly supportiug it.

CHAPTER III.

THE CAMPAIGN OF 1840.

I remember very distinctly the campaign of '40. Anybody living at that time and old enough to remember anything will recall it. This was a most remarkable contest. Never since has anything of the like occurred. It commenced in the month of December, 1839. The Whigs held their convention at Harrisburg, Pa., and nominated William H. Harrison of Ohio and John Tyler of Virginia. The Democrats met in convention at Baltimore in the spring of '40 and nominated Mr. Van Buren to be his successor. In April the campaign opened, and it continued with great energy and determination on the part of the Whigs up to the election, which at this time did not occur as now on one day, but at various dates from September to November. To give a full description of this campaign, as remembered by me, and the methods used to bring about success, would take more space than the importance of the matter will allow, but certainly it was very remarkable and unlike any before or since within my knowledge. The printing presses must have been very busy during the winter succeeding the convention, as the amount of campaign literature put out everywhere in the early spring was immense. Great placards with their candidates' pictures on the same, and headed in large type, "Tippecanoe and Tyler, too," were conspicuously exhibited. General Harrison was a soldier in

the war of 1812 and also in the Indian wars. He therefore received the above appellation as the hero of some of these fights. Great show cards having caricatures of Mr. Van Buren printed thereon, headed "Little Mattie," as he was called, were sent out through the country and posted up in public places on farmers' barns, on the highways and in taverns.

My father had occasion, in the fall of this year, to take a journey into New Hampshire to his birthplace, to visit his father, then living, and took me along with him. All along the road and in the villages everywhere this boom of electioneering was the order of the day. The people did not appear to have anything else to do, and it was kept up late into the night, as we found in the taverns where we stopped for the night. It was a continual discussion of politics everywhere.

One of the most important adjuncts in this remarkable campaign was a veritable log cabin, built as near as possible as a fac-simile of the one some time before occupied by their candidate on the banks of the Ohio river. Many of the less informed believed he then lived in such a home. This building was usually about fifteen to twenty feet long by about eight to ten feet wide, well and strongly put together, with flags and banners flying from all its points. In addition to this, on the outside as well as within, there was located a hard cider barrel, said to be filled with cider, free to all who came; also plenty of refreshments of all kinds were provided. The building was placed on wheels, to be taken wherever desired, drawn by oxen in the country and by horses in cities. It was a frequent occurrence in

my native village to observe one of these cabins going along, drawn by long strings of oxen or horses, filled with men and boys singing campaign songs. Some one of the number would stand on the platform on the outside near the cider barrel, making loud speeches and shouting to the gathered crowd. This was kept up throughout the day and into the night. There were nailed on the outside of the cabin one or more coon skins to assist the honest people in making up their minds on the great questions of bank, finance and other affairs of government; that they might realize the humble origin of their candidate, who was said to be a good hunter of these animals.

Among the large amount of campaign literature carried for distribution was a statement of one Ogle of Pennsylvania, circulated and published by the Whig press throughout the country, representing Van Buren as an aristocrat, seated in the White House, surrounded by his special friends and supporters, whose table was provided with roast beef and other substantial luxuries, using gold-lined table ware brought from England, including gold spoons and other costly fixings, all of the most regal kind and style, and all at the cost of the taxpayers. But this whole statement was such a bare-faced falsehood that leading Whig congressmen, to save the honor and credit of the government, came out in the press of the country, over their own signatures, refuting the whole statement as untrue in every particular. This was honorable in them; but the statement got into all the Whig papers and into the homes of the humble, and, no doubt, was believed and had the effect intended by its author.

The wives and daughters of Whigs took much interest in the fight, although women's rights, as a political factor, was quite unknown at this time. They joined in with their husbands and brothers to work for "Tippecanoe and Tyler, too," and to exhibit their interest, wore on their persons campaign medals of the various kinds and descriptions worn by the men. Some of these were costly and were suspended by neck chains or attached to watch chains, or pinned on their apparel, as is done at the present day. Another article much worn was an apron with a good imitation of the form of a coon skin worked upon it by needle. Many of these aprons, bearing the imprint of a coon skin, were kept for sale at the stores everywhere. Many of them were well and neatly gotten up, and they were conspicuous on all public occasions and at all social gatherings of Whigs.

The public charges brought against Mr. Van Buren were many, and some of them were of a serious and degraded nature, and were met by the Democratic party. But the party, being in power, was of course on the defensive, and used all their means to meet the fierce onslaught of their opponents. Among the statements of the Whigs that had much effect on the working men was the prevailing hard times. This, they charged, was owing to the conduct of the administration, the refusal to re-charter the bank and extravagence in every department of government. To elect Van Buren, they said, was to continue this state of things. But if they would elect Harrison, a change would be brought about. The bank would be re-established, extravagance in expenses cut off, the tax-

payer relieved, business would start and prosper, and the honest laboring man would receive advanced pay, "two dollars per day, and roast beef." This was heard from every stump and in all the Whig papers and was placarded everywhere.

The Democratic party was well organized and compact, but it was impossible, as against the attacks of their opponents, to keep all their men in line.

The Whig candidate for vice president, John Tyler, an old Virginia Democrat, who rebelled against the Jackson and Van Buren regime and joined the Whigs, was an able, astute politician and had had large experience in government as congressman. His defection brought over to the Whigs many disgruntled Democrats and exerted great influence against the party in power. But the Whigs were soon to realize that his nomination was an unfortunate one for them. Both parties put forth their ablest men on the stump and in almost every village in the land some of them were heard. Everything possible was done by both parties to carry the election, which, as I have said before, was the most exciting and well-contested ever fought in this country

CHAPTER IV.

HENRY WILSON.—PRESIDENT TYLER'S VISIT TO BOSTON.—THE WASHINGTON TEMPERANCE REFORMATION.

I was then in my 15th year, and of course, like every other young man of my age or older, could not avoid becoming greatly interested through the peculiar state of the country and the great excitement prevailing, so that this remarkable campaign is well remembered by me in all its particulars. Among the eminent Whigs who were on the stump were Daniel Webster, Henry Clay, Rufus Choate and ex-Gov. Levi Lincoln in this state I heard none of these men in this campaign, but did in later ones. There was one man who made his appearance in this campaign worthy of special mention, who later on reached the senate, as senator from Massachusetts, and the vice presidency in General Grant's administration, dying while in that office. This was Henry Wilson, coming from Natick in this state, although born in New Hampshire.

He was known as the "Natick Cobbler," being a shoe worker in that town and going from the bench on to the stump in behalf of the working men, as one of them. He spoke in all parts of the country with great success and secured a reputation as an effective stump speaker. He claimed the hard times were the effect of the Democratic policy of free trade. His theme was protection to American workmen, and he presented it very effectually. He

came to my town, but I do not remember hearing him then. Later on I had the pleasure of his personal acquaintance. He came from a very humble position, working on a shoemaker's bench, and at this time dependent on his daily earnings for a living. He had found time for reading and study early and late, and the reading of newspapers, periodicals and history enabled him, through his good memory, to acquire a large amount of knowledge concerning politics and general affairs. He tried to carry on a manufactory of shoes but failed. His mind, no doubt, was more in politics than in his factory. He established a daily newspaper in Boston, known as the Commonwealth, an anti-slavery organ, assisted by his wealthy anti-slavery friends, known as "Conscience" Whigs. He was a poor man throughout his life, needing aid and receiving it from his admirers. A self-made man of great energy and perseverance, an indomitable will, fighting for the right, as he saw it, to the end. His whole life goes to show young men what can be accomplished by industry, self-denial and honesty.

The result of the campaign was the overwhelming defeat of Mr. Van Buren and his party. The rejoicings of the victorious Whigs knew no bounds, and they celebrated the event by great gatherings all over the country. Banquets were the order of the day. I remember they held one in my town and Henry Wilson was present. In their speeches at these gatherings they proclaimed that the great foe of American industry, the Democratic party, was dead and beyond resurrection, and the country was saved, but they little apprehended what the future had in store for them. President

Harrison died suddenly at the end of his first month in office, much to the grief of all the people, as he was held in high respect as an honest, upright man, though not of large ability. He was the first president to die in office, and his death was more seriously felt by the patriotic masses.

Mr. Tyler, the vice president, became president, much to the distrust and fear of many of the party who elected him. It was not long before his course was made apparent to the country. Congress, in a special session called for the purpose of immediately carrying into effect the objects of the victory so sweepingly carried, at once passed a bill rechartering the bank and sent it to the president for his signature. But, as it appeared, Mr. Tyler was not ready to sign the bill. His old prejudice, as a Democrat, against such institutions revived and would not allow him to give life to another institution of the same kind; so he vetoed the bill.

This created a storm of indignation from the bank party. They were furious, and Mr. Clay, the chief promoter, took up the cudgel in the senate against the president, and declared war against him. Mr. Clay was sustained by the party generally, but the president was not to be moved from his position. All else in the party platform was of small importance as compared with this; the darling object of the great fight in which they had expended large sums of money was about to be lost to them. Of course the favored wealthy monopolists were wroth, and their anger knew no bounds. The great victorious party throughout the country was dismayed and much disturbed over the situation. The office-holders and those who ex-

pected office in the new administration kept quiet and in the end were the chief Whig supporters of the president. But Mr. Tyler stood firm and no bank was chartered.

The Whig party mostly followed Clay in opposition to the president. Therefore the great Whig party found itself in opposition to its own elected president, and through this became somewhat demoralized for a time, but later on recovered sufficiently to make a good fight in '44. But all was not lost to them. Congress passed a tariff bill, known as the "Tariff Bill of '42," which was approved by the president. This measure increased the revenue and gave special protection to many industries; which gave great satisfaction to manufacturing interests. This did much to quiet the opposition to Mr. Tyler, and in the end brought the party together for the next campaign. Still, the feeling against the president was strong and bitter among the masses of the Whig party.

Mr. Webster was secretary of state in Tyler's cabinet, and continued for some time after this break in the party, as he said at the time he desired to complete the settlement of the Northeast boundary question which was then pending and creating much friction between this country and England. This he accomplished through the Ashburton treaty, which was of great importance to the country and brought great renown to him, for which the country did him honor. The administration came in for considerable praise for its success in this important matter. The president's cabinet had been much changed since its beginning, and men who upheld Mr. Tyler were found there, when, in 1843,

Mr. Webster resigned, and a man of very different views on most political questions took his place.

This was John C. Calhoun, well known to every intelligent man in the country. He was very unlike Mr. Webster in everything, but he better represented the Tyler administration, which had begun to lean towards the Democratic party for support, Mr. Tyler hoping to unite that party in his favor for the purpose of a re-nomination. But this did not come about, the Democrats not being ready to surrender to Tyler.

One important measure was brought forward during the last year of his administration That was the annexation of Texas, which was begun and well nigh accomplished before the end of Mr. Tyler's term. The succeeding administration took it up and completed it.

In 1843 the president and his cabinet came to Boston through the invitation of the Bunker Hill Monument association to attend the celebration of the completion of the monument on the 17th of June. It was a great event, and the monument as it stands today is a reminder to those now living who were present on that day to see the president and hear Webster. The weather, up to nine o'clock of that morning, was very unfavorable. An easterly rain storm had prevailed for the two days previous and continued during the night preceding this day up to the time mentioned above, when all at once the storm moved away and it became clear and warm through the entire day, bringing much relief to thousands present and making the occasion a great success.

The president was well received by

the state and city authorities as all other presidents who have come to Massachusetts, notwithstanding the bitter feeling existing against him within the state. His reception was most gracious and generous

Mr. Webster was the orator, and of course met the occasion with one of his best efforts. It was my privilege to be there, but I failed, on account of the great crowd, to get near enough to hear him. But I saw him as he passed along in a carriage to the monument, and also had a good view of the president near the State House on Beacon street. He was a dignified, scholarly-looking man, rather slender in build, of medium height, sharp countenance, with a large nose which did not add to his good looks. His whole personal appearance indicated a strong and astute statesman. The members of his cabinet present I have forgotten, though I must have seen them with the rest.

The year of 1842 records the beginning of that great temperance revival, known as the Washingtonion Temperance reformation, which spread all over the country to every city and town of any size—a most remarkable and wonderful reform movement—nothing of its kind ever before or since has swept over this country in like volume of intensity of purpose, equalling this period of temperance reform. Starting out and basing its action on the principle of moral suasion, instead of legal restriction, seeking to raise up a higher moral standard upon which it could work out and bring to every home in the land the need of reformation in society, as it then existed, in the free use of intoxicating drinks, with no apparent moral or legal restriction.

The real condition of the community was downward and drunkenness was on the increase. Laws had been enacted to restrict the sale of liquor, but were unequal to the task, lacking moral support. Society seemed indifferent to the real situation and the drift of public sentiment appeared to be against enforcement of the laws. Juries, unless upon the most positive evidence, would not convict, so that the violator of the law cared little for its terrors, and the unrestricted sale of intoxicating drinks went on everywhere, notwithstanding the efforts of good temperance people to check its sale.

This was the general situation of the community at this time, if my memory is correct, although only in my teens, and the later vigorous action of reformers of recognized character and ability to put a stop to the existing evils, and the subsequent results of their efforts, made such an impression on my mind that it has not been forgotten.

The time for action had come, the newspapers had already published the fact of the meetings in some of the large cities of the country, held to consider the matter of how the great evil could be arrested. The result was the formation of that great organization, as before stated, "The Washingtonian Temperance Society," grounded in love and charity, to the taking up of the fallen and despised, reaching their better self, as it was declared, that there was no person, however low down and degraded, but what had a sympathetic spot somewhere in himself. This was the platform they formulated and upon which they did their work, and it was so effectively carried forward that it reached the farthest boundary of the

land, producing the greatest social reformation of the century. These societies were organized not only in all large cities and towns, but in the rural districts, reaching almost every hamlet. These good people did not hesitate to go down into the byways, the slums and gutters, to bring forth the degraded victims of intoxication. They did not pass over on the other side, but went straight for them to help them up, to show them in their degradation they had friends yet left who could speak to them and offer encouragement and hope in their extremity and show them a better side in life. This was the work done, as carried on by men and women in all stations of life, and through their faithful kindly spirit thousands were brought up, rescued and saved, and many of these were men of education and ability, who had seen better days, but had fallen, and a considerable number of them were able to go on to the platform to relate their sad experiences and show by their personal appearance what a terrible condition a strong man may fall into through indulgence in strong drink.

A large number of these men traveled over the country speaking to the people everywhere. I do not remember the names of many whom I had the opportunity to hear, but will recall a few who spoke at meetings where I was present—Hawkins, Mitchell, VanWagner and John B. Gough, and others of less repute. These men I heard a number of times and they were effective speakers, especially Gough, who was well known everywhere as an eloquent and effective platform lecturer and speaker. These men were all reformed and brought to better living through

this movement, and thereafter were able to do a vast amount of good to their fellow men and to die respected and honored by the public; but some who were prominent as public speakers in the end failed to keep their pledge and fell to go down to drunkards' graves, but out of the rank and file of those signing the pledge, within my personal knowledge, who I knew in their after lives, a majority kept their pledge and remained to the end true as temperance men, and I fully believe this to have been the result everywhere this reform reached. Of the very large number signing the pledge throughout the country, as it was said at the time, thousands were saved and made better men and citizens and carried joy to many a home, and its influence was felt more or less in the community in the direction of better legislation and more earnest and vigorous enforcement of restrictive laws relating to the sale of spirituous liquors; in fact it turned the tide in favor of temperance as against the era of free sale and indulgence in intoxicating drinks.

In this connection it may be well to refer to the character of and the mode of conducting the meetings held. They were somewhat peculiar and of the emotional sort after the manner of an old fashion Methodist camp meeting, open to all whom the spirit moved to speak and relate their experience; the singing was of the most spirited kind; printed slips containing the songs to be sung were distributed liberally, so that everyone with any music in him or her could join in the song. This was very effective and the large audiences—they always had crowded meetings—were carried to the highest pitch of enthusi-

asm. It was not an infrequent thing to observe tears rolling down the cheeks of stalwart men who, perhaps for the first time in their manhood lives, ever dropped a tear on any account. This I saw at meetings which I attended and, in the reports of the great meetings held in Boston and other places in the daily papers, the same effect was reported of the great crowds present. There is no doubt of the great effect wrought upon the minds of those coming to these meetings through the spontaneous manner of conducting them and the ultimate effect it had on many a man who could not be otherwise reached. The success of this great awaking was due very much to this particular method, and to the broad platform adopted and the sympathetic work of thousands of Christian men and women. This work continued for some time and only changed to other and less exciting methods through a number of years.

CHAPTER V.

CLAY AND POLK.— PRESIDENT POLK'S VISIT TO BOSTON.

The year 1844 was the great campaign known as the "Clay and Polk" contest. The Whigs were not discouraged and rallied in convention at Baltimore in full strength and vigor and nominated Henry Clay, the idol of the party, whom they knew could be trusted. They went into the campaign with a determination to win. The Democrats, as an organization, were solid and compact throughout the country and met in convention at Baltimore, confident of success. Mr. Van Buren and his friends expected he would receive the nomination, and he secured a majority of the votes on the first ballot, but owing to a rule adopted by this convention, it required two thirds of the whole number of delegates to nominate a candidate. This he failed to get, and as a compromise James K. Polk gained the required number and was nominated, very much to the disappointment of Mr. Van Buren and his friends. But they accepted the result and went into the contest for victory.

Pennsylvania, being a strong Democratic state, was accorded the vice president, in the person of George M. Dallas, an eminent citizen of that state, who added much to the strength of the ticket. It was in this campaign that the anti-slavery party made its appearance with a candidate, James G. Birney, a well known and respectable citizen of Ohio. His vote was small and had lit-

tle effect on the result in any of the states except in New York.

The campaign began in earnest immediately after the nominations were made and was contested everywhere with great energy, each party feeling confident of success. Mr. Clay travelled over the country, gained much attention from his friends and made many speeches.

The platform of the Whig party was short. The bank question did not enter into the discussion as much as the question of tariff, as the Democrats made this a prominent issue. Texan annexation was also prominent, the Whigs as a party opposing it, while the Democras favored it. The tariff, Texan annexation and the Oregon line controversy were the main issues involved.

Ex-President Jackson was then living at his home in Tennessee, very feeble, but able to take considerable interest in the campaign. Mr. Polk, coming from his state, was very satisfactory to him. He had known him in congress as speaker of the house during his last term in office, as a strong supporter of his administration, and his endorsement of Mr. Polk went a great way in strengthening the confidence of the party in their candidate and did much to enthuse them in support of the ticket.

Besides the tariff and the Texas annexation issue, the Oregon line question assumed much importance. The then territorial government claimed their northern line as at 54 degrees 40 minutes north latitude, but the British government claimed a much lower line, and the contention became sharp and irritating, causing much excitement and feeling against Great Britain. The Whigs were ready to compromise, but

Oregon would not consent and made a political question of it, which came into this campaign. The Democrats maintained the claim of Oregon, and everywhere, on the stump and in the press, declared for 54:40, or fight. This was used with much effect and aided them greatly in the contest.

Jackson had been well known over the country as "Old Hickory." Polk coming from the same state, was proclaimed "Young Hickory," and the battle cry on all banners and election paraphernalia was "Young Hickory, Dallas and Victory."

Among the young men who appeared upon the Democratic platform in this state in this campaign were N. P. Banks, George S. Boutwell, Benjamin F. Butler, who later became governors, senators and representatives in congress, obtaining high positions as statesmen and soldiers. These men it was my good fortune to meet in party conventions subsequently, and to appreciate them as earnest and able men whose ability and power did much to help this grand old Commonwealth. Of these, Mr. Boutwell is still living. One other very able man was on the stump at this time, Robert Rantoul, Jr., of Beverly, one of the ablest men then before the people, who was subsequently in congress as representative and senator from this state. He made the tariff his special subject for discussion, and I was present at one of his meetings. He was a strong, clear speaker, who understood the tariff question in all its bearings. At this meeting he produced rolls of cloth made of wool, unfolding them before the audience, showing the various classes of cloth made into clothing, the kinds and grades of wool used, and the

effect of the tariff on the cost of the same, showing the mistake of taxing the raw materials used in the manufacture of the same. If my memory is correct, he made out a pretty good case. He was well known as a champion of sound money and free trade, a Democrat of the Jackson stamp and a good lawyer of national reputation.

There were other men in this state of national prominence in this campaign, but I cannot take space here to mention them. The result of the campaign was the triumph of Mr. Polk and his party. It was a severe disappointment to the Whigs, as they were sanguine of success, and defeat was a sore surprise.

I took considerable interest in this campaign, being an ardent Democrat of the Jackson school, and attended many gatherings. I was also a member of a "Hickory" club, as the clubs were called. I remember pretty well this campaign and the administration of Mr. Polk and what it accomplished.

During his administration the president made a tour through New England and the East. I think this was in 1846 or 1847, but I am not certain about it. I went to Boston to see him. Mr. Buchanan, his secretary of state, and William L. Marcy, secretary of war, were with him, I remember. Their reception was of the most elaborate character. The governor, George N. Briggs, and staff, and a large number of state dignitaries, mayor of Boston and the United States officials located in Boston, with the state militia, met the president at the foot of the Common on Beacon street. The train on which he came was stopped at the Brookline crossing on the Boston and Worcester (now Boston and Albany) railroad. The

Boston Lancers went out to escort him and his party to the city, coming in over the mill dam, as it was then called, later Western avenue, and now Beacon street. The Public Garden was not then in existence. The very extensive marshes extended from Charles street at the foot of the Common to Brookline and Roxbury, and easterly to South Boston, leaving an almost unobstructed view of that part of the city. About half way from the foot of the Common over the mill dam road were the tide water mills for grinding grain and buildings for the storage and sale of it. Few other buildings were to be seen. Out of the city on the roads leading to Dorchester and Roxbury, or to the Brighton line, no improvement had been begun at this date, and often at high tide this territory, which was marshy, was submerged. This was the appearance of this part of Boston at this time. I remember I stood on what was then a plank sidewalk built up a few feet from the marsh below, connecting with Charles street, and there awaited the coming of the expected guests. While there, although the sun had been shining brightly, a cloud passed over which dropped a slight shower of rain, but passed along without doing any more damage than slightly wetting the crowd. This was the only disagreeable feature.

When the president's carriage came along side the governor's carriage, the president stood up, so we had a good view of him. Dignified, above medium stature, stooping somewhat, dressed in black with a plain silk neck stock of the pattern then universally worn by men of his age, with gray hair and an ordinary silk tile of the then pattern—

his general appearance indicated conservatism, ability and firmness—a strong man who made a favorable impression everywhere.

Mr. Buchanan, secretary of state, particularly attracted attention. A fine-looking, stalwart man, clean shaven, wearing a white neck-tie and a shining silk hat—his whole appearance indicated great care of dress. His large build, erect and upwards of six feet tall, drew upon him special attention.

The reception was all that could be desired. Massachusetts and the city of Boston have never failed to do the generous thing whenever a chief magitsrate has come within the state. The next day the president was taken to Cambridge, to Harvard college, as his predecessors had been, and received a substantial greeting. It is said the president was much pleased with the reception and took occasion to express his appreciation of it.

At the end of his term he retired to his home in Tennessee and died soon after, to the great regret of the country.

CHAPTER VI.

THE COCHITUATE WATER WORKS — BEGUN IN AUGUST, 1846.— FINISHED IN OCTOBER, 1848.

The year of 1848 brought to the city of Boston an event of immense importance and of very great benefit to all its inhabitants—the successful introduction of water.

This great public improvement attracted the attention of people far and wide. Few of the large cities of the country had, at this time, entered upon construction of municipal water systems—no other local government in New England had attempted a work of such magnitude—or even considered it—and to project an undertaking requiring such an immense expenditure of money was to many intelligent minds of doubtful utility and wisdom, and it took Boston more than twenty years after its first suggestion by Mayor Quincy "the first," to put into operation and make it an accomplished fact, and this, through much opposition from conservative taxpayers, who from fear of increased taxation are generally found opposing any municipal scheme that suggests possible advancement and benefit to public interest, where the outlay of money is a factor. This we may remember was the case in Fitchburg (before it became a city) when it was proposed to introduce a water system at the expense of the town—that it met great opposition from its conservative men, and required a number of town meetings to successfully carry the pro-

ject, which experience has proven beyond a question to be the greatest improvement ever undertaken for benefit and relief of its people.

Boston had the same experience, meeting the same opposition from its timorous taxpayers and short-sighted citizens. Through the long period of two decades it was discussed and voted on, to be defeated when referred to the people, but the far-sighted intelligence of a few of Boston's great men prevailed, and at a second reference to the people it was carried and the work finally begun in 1846.

The estimate of its cost was three millions of dollars, but up to its completion in 1848, the expenditure had only reached about one-half of this sum. The doubt in the minds of capitalists showed itself in the hesitation exhibited in purchasing the bonds issued by the city to secure money. The lack of confidence in its success operated much against the prompt receipt of the necessary means.

Money was not so plenty in those days as now, seeking investment. The country was not so rich and the accumulations of savings banks were very insignificant, as compared with the present time, and the number of these banks and other institutions for the savings of the common people were comparatively few, with no more money than could be invested at the home of the bank.

The commissioners having charge of this great enterprise were obliged to advertise not only in this country, but in Europe, the bonds of the city of Boston for this purpose—at a rate of interest greater than now paid on any of the city's securities.

This delayed the commencement of the work, but in August of 1846 the ground was broken at Long Pond in the town of Natick, where the right to take the water had been secured. The beginning of the work was celebrated at the starting place in the northern part of the town, now known as Cochituate. This name was given this place and to the pond, at this opening, and it has ever since been known as Cochituate Lake, (the original Indian name). It was a pleasant day; the company officially consisted of the mayor, city government, commissioners and invited guests, including a band of music, going by special train from Boston, a distance of about fifteen miles. Among the guests was the venerable ex-President John Quincy Adams, also the venerable Josiah Quincy, second mayor of Boston, father of Mayor Josiah Quincy, Jr., who presided on this occasion, and great-grandfather of Josiah Quincy, Jr., mayor for the past four years. Among other prominent citizens of Boston, as one of the commissioners, was Nathan Hale, who may be remembered by some of our older citizens as one of Boston's leading men in every enterprise intended for the upbuilding of the city and for the benefit of its inhabitants. It may be well to say that he was long the editor and proprietor of that old time standard newspaper, the Boston Advertiser.

As a part of the exercises of this day, as reported at the time, was the removal of the first spade of earth by the mayor, using a silver spade made for the occasion. When the mayor had taken up the spadeful he passed the spade to ex-President Adams, who first removed his coat, then threw a number of spadefuls, then the spade was passed

to the elder ex-Mayor Josiah Quincy, who, twenty years before, had proposed this work and suggested this sheet of water. He also removed his coat and it was said exerted considerable vigor in using the spade.

I remember this occasion very well, although not present, but living only a few miles distant from this place, as it was fully reported in all of the papers of the time in every detail. The whole neighborhood took great interest in it, the greatest project ever attempted and begun in this part of the state, and I may add that my knowledge of the business was somewhat increased by the fact that during that fall and the early part of the succeeding winter I was temporarily located in Natick and boarded in the family where the chief assistant engineer lodged, who had charge of this section of the work. This gave me an opportunity to learn much of this undertaking and I occasionally visited the place while the work was going on. As I never before had the chance to view an engineering work of such magnitude, it interested me very much and is not forgotten.

The work on the whole line was carried along rapidly and successfully and water was introduced into the city in two years from the beginning. Upon its completion the city got up a great public celebration of the event, which took place in October of 1848; this was one of Boston's great occasions and was carried forward on a large scale. The day was very fine, nature certainly smiled on the undertaking, and it was a success. The military of the city and immediate country were present, also a large number of civic bodies, all of any note in the city and from the

neighborhood outside, also the Merchants' association and trades, representing their occupations, in fact all classes of people were represented in various associations. The Masons and Odd Fellows and different temperance societies; the fire departments were fully and elegantly represented, the governor and lieutenant governor and state and United States officials and city government, all making a long procession; its length delayed its arrival on the Common to witness the letting on the water into the frog pond, which was a part of the program. It was near sunset when the entire procession reached the Common. I was a member of one of the associations in the line and marched the entire route of the procession. Our place in the line brought us near the pond, giving a good opportunity to see the water let in. The sun was just going below the horizon when the mayor from a stand erected for the city officials and invited guests announced that they were ready to let in the water, but owing to the lateness of the hour, it was being considered whether to perform that part of the program and he would leave it to the assembled multitude to say whether they would remain to see it done. The response was one tremendous shout. This settled the matter, when an engineer proceeded to turn the gate. I do not remember how long the water was in making its appearance, but when it did come, and shot up into the air, the artillery posted in one part of the Common and all the bands present and the tremendous shouts of the gathered hosts joined in one grand chorus that must have been heard a great distance. The stream came out of a six or eight inch

pipe and went up about 60 or 70 feet. This large volume of water going up such a distance, in falling, produced a large quantity of spray, to which the last rays of the setting sun shining through, gave a most brilliant appearance and raised the enthusiasm of the great multitude to the highest pitch. It was a grand spectacle and a grand final of this great event and of this most successful celebration.

I remember it well, and I do not remember any similar occasion that gave me more pleasure; in fact, everybody was delighted over the successful introduction of pure water, and the problem so long discussed was solved.

This was only the beginning of that immense system now in progress of construction, costing many millions of dollars—the great Metropolitan Water System of Boston and its suburban neighborhood.

CHAPTER VII.

CAMPAIGN OF 1848.—WEBSTER'S SPEECH IN WORCESTER.—FILLMORE'S ADMINISTRATION.

The presidential campaign of 1848 opened with vigor and the Whigs were hopeful of success although somewhat divided on the slavery issue. But as an organization they were united up to the beginning of this canvass. Clay and Webster were yet before the country as probable candidates for the nomination. Mr. Webster's friends were quite hopeful of his nomination, but the more practical politicians had doubts of his availability and looked about for a candidate who was less committed on the great questions at issue before the country.

General Zachary Taylor, a successful general in the Mexican war, whose home was in Louisiana, was being mentioned in various parts of the country as one of those military heroes, then as now, popular with the people. What his views were on the questions of the day were unknown, but he was reported to be a good Whig of long standing. This attracted the attention of the Whig politicians, and they at once began to bring him forward as the Whig candidate more available than the well known statesmen, Clay and Webster.

Policy dictated the wisdom of ignoring these great men for one less known, who possessed military prestige and renown, without the political knowledge necessary for the position of president. But the situation demanded a candidate

who could command votes from the masses regardless of qualifications essential to the office. With this situation before them the great national Whig party assembled in convention in Philadelphia, with all the states represented. In the beginning of the convention there was much difference of opinion on the questions then agitating the country, the slavery question being uppermost. It was a most troublesome matter, and delegates from the North, or many of them, were decidedy opposed to the further extension of that institution into the territories and would not accept any compromise or any platform which did not state clearly that doctrine. To this the majority did not accede. Therefore the anti-slavery delegates left the convention and subsequently met together and formed a strong protesting body.

The convention went on and made no platform, avoiding, as far as possible, anything irritating the South, and nominated General Zachary Taylor of Louisiana and Millard Fillmore of New York.

The nomination of General Taylor did not meet with the hearty endorsement of the Whigs of Massachusetts, but was accepted by the party as an organization. Many declined to follow the party and joined the bolters, who appeared to be making much headway in their opposition to the ticket. Mr. Webster was the choice of the party in this state, with the exception of a few very prominent men who doubted the availabilty of Mr. Webster as a candidate. Abbott Lawrence, a wealthy manufacturer and a strong influential Whig, took ground against the advisability of Webster's nomination and went

into the convention against him. He favored General Taylor on the ground of availability as a successful general.

The great objection against Taylor was that it was not known what his political opinions were or how he stood on the great questions at issue, but Mr. Lawrence assured them that he had satisfactory evidence of his position, that he was a Whig and had always been one, and that his state of Louisiana endorsed him fully as a Whig. But Mr. Webster and his friends felt disappointed at the result and there is no question as to the fact that a large majority of Massachusetts and New England Whigs were in favor of his (Webster's) nomination, as he was then recognized as the great statesman of the country and leader of the Whig party. While Mr. Webster gave in his adhesion and supported the ticket, he said it was a nomination "not fit to be made."

The campaign opened lively and the party in New England and throughout the country was practically intact, notwithstanding the fact that in the Eastern states a large bolting contingent was in active opposition to the ticket and was about effecting a powerful organization to oppose it. Massachusetts led in this opposition, E. R. Hoar, Charles Francis Adams, Charles Allen, Henry Wilson, George F. Hoar, Anson Burlingame and others more or less prominent in politics in the state were very active and determined in their action. These bolters were called "Conscience" Whigs, because they could not violate their consciences by supporting what they opposed. Those who adhered to the regular nomination were known as "Cotton" Whigs, represent-

ing the great manufacturing and commercial interests of the country which, as they believed and proclaimed, were essential to the good of the whole country rather than a sectional fight over the slavery issue, which would damage business interests and endanger the Union.

The Democrats met in convention at Baltimore and all the states were represented. The question of extending slavery into the territories was a disturbing matter, but was finally settled by a compromise platform, and General Lewis Cass of Michigan was nominated for president and General William S. Butler of Kentucky for vice president. The convention was generally harmonious and the ticket nominated gave good satisfaction all over the country. The party went into the campaign confident of victory, although being in power and many questions having been acted on in a manner not satisfactory to all and many having been disappointed through failure to secure office, a considerable number bolted from it. Among the number were ex-President Van Buren and his personal friends, mostly located in New York. They came out openly against General Cass and joined with the "Conscience" Whigs and Anti-Slavery Free Soil party, as it was called, in convention at Buffalo.

The free states were more or less represented in this convention by a large attendance and much interest and enthusiasm prevailed. The result of this gathering was the nomination of Mr. Van Buren for president and Charles Francis Adams for vice president. This combination did not please the straight anti-slavery men or the Whig contingent, but it was made and no other

way was presented by which they could better themselves. So they all acquiesced in the ticket and went into the fight as a protest against the slave power, which appeared to be getting control of the great parties of the country. Not expecting to elect the nominees they entered into the fight with great vigor and determination, and in this state effected a large diversion from the Whigs and also from the Democrats.

It was well understood at the time that Mr. Van Buren was more in the fight as against General Cass, who, he alleged, prevented his renomination in 1844, for which opinion there was evidently some ground. He accomplished his purpose, as his being in the race gave Taylor New York and elected him. This was the result of the Van Buren move, and Van Buren was satisfied, as he and his friends went back into the Democratic party later.

The Whigs in this state, led by Abbott Lawrence, were determined to keep this state in line for the Whig candidate and went into the fight with a will, and, as was known, with ample means on hand to make a strong campaign. All the large cities and towns were thoroughly canvassed and organized and liberal sums of money were given them to carry on the work. The power of wealth, when brought out, was amply shown by a thorough and systematic organization everywhere. None of their opponents could meet them in this respect. The great commercial interests were combined and they poured out their money like water to keep the old Commonwealth in line for Taylor and Fillmore. In this effort the campaign on the part of the Whigs nearly equalled that of Harrison and

Tyler, but on a much higher plane. They did not descend into the gutters or dram shops to make voters, and carried on the canvass very earnestly, but decently.

Their campaign clubs were all uniformed, and when out, presented a fine appearance. This was the case in all parts of the state—at least so far as my observation went. I remember being in Boston on the night of the great torch-light procession of the Whigs (the greatest one I ever saw, and I have seen many since). I stood on Cornhill at the then junction of Washington street over two hours viewing this splendid pageant, presenting a solid front, without a break from curb to curb, every one in uniform, not boys, but men, composed of the young men of Boston, elegantly equipped with handsome banners and torches, accompanied by bands marching within sound of each other's music. The thousands in line were singing campaign songs adapted to the music of the bands. How many were in line I do not remember, but the number was great and the affair brilliant. As the old saying is: "Money can make the mare go." Abbott Lawrence, chairman of the state committee, was present and received a marching salute.

This was followed in a few days by another torch light turn-out—this time by the Free Soilers or Van Buren men, led by Henry Wilson as marshal. This was a fine turn-out elegantly gotten up and carried through. I was on State street and saw the procession go through there. Red fire, common enough now, but new then, aided very much in the effect of the whole affair.

In about a week the Democrats had

their turn-out and did well, taking into consideration the very much less number of men to get into line. But the office-holders under Polk were quite numerous and through the money drawn from them the party was able to make quite a respectable turn-out, but when election day came they did not, in this state, make so good a showing, the result being that they were the third party in the fight; but this would not have disturbed them had they succeeded in electing General Cass because they would have held on to the offices, which at that time was the chief inducement in Democratic politics to keep up a good fighting organization.

It was in this campaign that I had the first opportunity to hear Daniel Webster in the then town of Worcester on a very warm night in November just before election. Not only was the weather extremely warm for the season, but it was very hot in politics in that town on that night, and had been from the beginning of the campaign. Worcester, up to this campaign, had always been a strong Whig town. Democrats had no show there. But in the result of the canvass the Whigs were badly beaten and never after recovered their ascendency.

On this night it came to my attention that Mr. Webster was to speak in the above place. Thinking it might be my only opportunity to hear him I went from my then home, a distance of about twenty-five miles, and returned the same night well paid for my journey. Hearing that great man was ample return for my night's work.

When I arrived the streets were crowded and alive with torch-light processions, most of them Free Soil clubs, a

large number coming in from all parts of the county, not to hear Webster, but as a defiance to him and the Whigs. The town hall, which subsequently became the city hall, was crowded to excess, but I managed to get in, stood up through the entire speech and had a good position to see and hear. Judge Ira Barton, eminent and well known, presided, and his dignified appearance attracted my attention.

Mr. Webster was dressed, as was his custom on all occasions, in a blue coat, rather high collar, gilt buttons, buff vest and blue pants. He wore a medium high neck stock of black with a turned down "dickey," as then called. I noticed particularly his large prominent eyebrows, which overhung a pair of dark bright eyes. He was evidently not at his best, but he gave forth ponderous words that fell like thunderbolts on one's head. This was as I realized it, although he pretty thoroughly berated General Cass, for whom I intended to vote, and I shall never forget the occasion. He paid attention to Van Buren and the uproarious Free Soilers outside the hall, who were making the whole place around the hall resound with their enthusiasm and music. He would turn to the open window near him and point out to the "foes of the Union and the peace of the country," as he called them. And to Van Buren he referred as the "arch deceiver and trifler over the great danger that would come to the country if he was elected."

The windows were open and but for the great noise outside he might have been heard without difficulty in the street around the hall. His voice was heavy and round with a very distinct enunciation, so that no difficulty would

prevent his being heard quite distant from his stand point. To realize the power of his speech one must have heard it. No other person whom it has been my fortune to hear before or since ever produced on my mind the effect which his power as a public speaker did.

On this occasion he was surrounded on the platform by men long eminent in the annals of this country—the venerable Levi Lincoln, who sat in the cabinet of President Jefferson, was governor of this state for a number of years, a member of congress for several terms, and later, when Worcester became a city, its first mayor; John Davis, then United States senator from this state; the venerable John W. Lincoln, long high sheriff of this county; the Newtons, Kinnicuts, Stephen Salisbury and other prominent citizens of the town and county. On the Free Soil side that night were to be seen Charles Allen, at that time candidate for representative to congress, John Milton Earle, editor of the Spy, Judge Henry Chapin, Adin Thayer and many other prominent citizens of Worcester, then leaders in politics and very active in the anti-slavery movement and come-outers from the old Whig party.

The feeling ran high and very great excitement and noise prevailed everywhere. They were all very much in earnest, every one took sides and went into the fight with a will, spending money freely—more so than now. The mass of the people do not get as excited now as they did then, judging by my experience and memory.

It was in this campaign that I had an opportunity to hear John Van Buren, son of the nominee, ex-President Van

Buren, in Faneuil Hall in Boston. He was an eminent lawyer and a polished speaker, powerful and strong in expression. He was a large man, well built, and commanded the full attention of the audience, which filled the hall to its fullest capacity It appears he was there to punish General Cass rather than to rake the Whigs There did not seem to be much left of the Democratic candidate when he got through with him. This was the last campaign in which he or his father acted with the Free Soilers. In the next general election, in 1852, they both, with their large contingent of Free Soil Democrats in New York, supported Franklin Pierce for president.

Mr. Taylor did not survive beyond his first year in office. He died quite suddenly at Washington. The vice president, Mr. Fillmore, succeeded him. Mr. Fillmore was an able conservative president and generally held the confidence and respect of the people. During his term an effort was made to bring about a satisfactory adjustment of the slavery agitation and remove it from the councils of the country. The compromise measures, as then and now known, of 1850, were enacted into law, and Mr. Webster was an active factor in this business with Henry Clay. He was no doubt actuated by patriotic purposes, hoping to reach some point that would satisfy the country, South as well as North. So obnoxious was the Fugitive Slave Law that the North almost unanimously objected to its passage and large numbers of prominent men took strong and decided position against it. This extreme and radical law upset the plan of conciliation and at once created great opposition to the enforcement of

the law. Mr. Webster tried to explain and appeal to his Northern constituents to accept it, but he failed, and it had the effect of closing his political life. In the following year he died at his residence in Marshfield in this state.

The frequent visits of slave hunters to the North in search of runaway slaves and their rendition under the law created great excitement and turmoil and increased the anti-slavery feeling very much. By this state of the public mind the Free Soil party was much increased in power through the North.

During Mr. Fillmore's administration the Free Soil party had become a strong factor in the politics of this state, and their opposition to the retiring administration was very strong and decided and led them to organize everywhere against the dominant party. The Whigs had controlled the state for a long time and were strongly entrenched in power, holding all the offices.

Under the state constitution then in force it required a majority of all the votes cast to elect. There being three parties in the field the smallest party could hold the balance of power and thereby prevent an election. Many towns, through this situation, failed to elect their town officers and were put to much expense and trouble. Also, in many instances, towns were without representation in the legislature for several terms. This produced a demand for a change of the constitution, but the Whigs opposed it, as it might result in their loss of power.

To bring about a change in this state of affairs the opposition, composed of the Free Soilers and Democrats, made a coalition, as it was called, dividing the offices to be filled by a joint ticket at

the polls made up from each party in proportion to the number of votes cast in the previous election, with the exception of governor and lieutenant governor.

It was difficult work to get these differing elements to work together, and the first attempt failed. The second succeeded, and the result was a majority against the Whigs in the legislature. Henry Wilson was one of the prime movers in this arrangement on the Free Soil side, and many others prominent in the same party, including Charles Sumner, were active promoters. On the Democratic side most of the rank and file favored it, but a few "hard shells," as they were then called, who were always looking to Washington for crumbs that might come to them in the event of national success, opposed it. Nearly all the leaders went into it, hoping to obtain some of the state offices; but a large number of Free Soilers did not come into line under this arrangement, having a strong dislike to their old enemy, the Democratic party. Judge E. R. Hoar, George F. Hoar and others of their class preferred the state government of the Whigs to one made up of Democrats and their less scrupulous friends. But in 1850 this coalition secured the legislature, and after much wrangling, succeeded in electing Charles Sumner to the senate and also put into the governor's chair the Democratic candidate, George S. Boutwell. Under the majority rule there was no choice of state officers at the state election, and the legislature therefore filled the vacant offices. The Democrats were to have the state offices in return for the office of United States senator, which was to be filled by Mr. Sumner. In the begin-

ning many of the Democrats failed to stand up to the agreement, but after a long and very exciting fight enough of them came in to elect Mr. Sumner, and in addition, elected Robert Rantoul, Jr., a Democrat, to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of Mr. Webster in the United States senate.

The Whigs made a great noise over it and denounced it as a corrupt bargain, but the result of the arrangement in the end was a constitutional convention, which was to give the state a new constitution and change the whole election machinery, adopting a plurality rule and divide the state into new election districts. Boston, under the old constitution, could send 44 representatives to the legislature on one ticket and six senators. This gave the Whigs their power in the state.

The new constitution, as made at the convention, held for that purpose during the year, failed to receive the approval of the people, and therefore did not become a law. Five or six years subsequently a new convention was called which made a constitution which received the approval of the voters and became the present constitution of the state

CHAPTER VIII.

WEBSTER MURDER TRIAL.

In the fall of 1849 occurred an event that stirred the community to its very depth. This was the murder of Dr. George Parkman by Professor John W. Webster of Boston.

Dr. Parkman was an old gentleman of the Parkman family, well known as among the wealthy and aristocratic families of the city. Mr. Webster was a professor in the Massachusetts Medical college in Boston, a man of high professional reputation and of good social standing. The position of these parties in the select society of Boston made this occurrence a matter of great interest and notoriety all over the country. No event of a similar character since the murder of Captain Joseph White, a prominent and wealthy citizen of Salem, by his nephews, the Knapps, some twenty years before, caused such an intense interest in the minds of all classes in the community as this. The trial of Prof. Webster in March of the following year attracted the attention of the bar, press and public to an extent exceeding any previous case of a like character.

The facts of the case, as related at the time and subsequently confirmed by the accused's confession, were these: He was in need of money and borrowed from Dr. Parkman, who was a moneylender, from time to time, as his necessities required He failed to make payment to the satisfaction of the lender,

who pressed him hard to pay. Parkman had the reputation of being a sharp, penurious man, of not agreeable presence. He is supposed to have pursued Webster to such an extent as to make the professor angry and consequently lose control of himself.

When Parkman appeared again in Webster's office to urge payment the professor became excited and instead of paying the money due knocked Parkman down so violently as to cause the latter's death. Then, to remove the evidence of his crime, he cut up the body, putting portions of it into the vaults and burning the remainder in his office grate.

When Parkman failed to put in an appearance at his home a search was made and he was traced to the office of Webster, that being the place where he had last been seen. Webster told the inquirers that Parkman had been there, had gone out and had not since been seen by him.

No one at this time suspected the professor as in any way connected with Parkman's disappearance. As the search was proving unsuccessful Robert G. Shaw, one of Boston's wealthy citizens, a relative of the Parkman family, offered a reward of three thousand dollars for the finding of Parkman, dead or alive. This inducement brought success. The janitor of the building, a Mr. Littlefield, upon this offer, succeeded in bringing forth the parts of the body thrown into the vaults. Then suspicion rested on the professor and he was arrested. But the public was slow to believe him guilty and thought that if the murder had been committed in the building Littlefield was the guilty man.

The trial of this important case ab-

sorbed the interest of all classes of people and nothing else was talked about during its progress and for some time after. It took place before the supreme court of this state, Chief Justice Shaw presiding, with Justices Wilde, Dewey and Metcalf as associates. The excitement was very great and multitudes rushed to get into the court room, which was in the old court house in Court square.

I was in Boston on the last day of the trial, which was Saturday. When I got into the square a large crowd was gathered, trying to get in, but a number of constables, with iron bars, stood at the outer door, holding the doors with the aid of these bars and only allowing a few to enter at a time. My chance of getting in appeared rather poor, but I met a townsman there who said he was going to get in, if possible, and if I would follow him we would succeed. This I did and after much jamming and getting squeezed I got in and was shown to the gallery. No more were admitted than could be seated and they were allowed to remain in the gallery but five minutes. After the alloted time had expired we passed out by another door and our places were filled by others coming in. This was done throughout the trial and was accomplished without noise or disturbance, as the stairways were covered with thick matting, as were also all the passageways leading to the seats in the gallery. Notwithstanding the immense crowd coming in and going out there was an almost breathless silence pervading the court room. The very air seemed impregnated with this solemn and impressive occasion. In the court room below I saw the assembled wealth

of Boston filling every seat that could be put in. Never since has any court room in this Commonwealth contained an audience so select or of men and women noted as representing the best culture in the state and nation.

The prisoner sat with his wife and daughters near him—a large, broad-shouldered man, with a large, well-developed head and slightly gray hair, and wore gold-bowed spectacles, a fine-looking man, dressed in black.

The appearance of the venerable chief justice, bordering on four-score years, was most dignified and remarkable. If I remember aright he wore a skull-cap over rather light hair. His countenance was like marble, indicating a lack of blood.

The attorneys for the defense were Pliny Merrick of Worcester, afterwards a judge of the supreme judicial court, and E. D. Sohier of Boston. Merrick had finished his closing argument when I entered and Attorney-General John H. Clifford of New Bedford, subsequently governor of the state, was speaking. The short space of time during which I was permitted to hear him impressed me with his ability and power before a jury. His effort in this case, whicl was said to be his greatest, gave him a position among the great lawyers of the land.

The jury returned a verdict of guilty that evening. This result was unexpected and against the very general opinion of the public and the press. On the streets and in public places there appeared but one opinion. Hardly a person was heard in favor of the verdict. The newspapers everywhere criticised the trial and its result, some of them doing so very severely, sparing

not even the charge of the chief justice to the jury. The feeling at the time was very strong against Janitor Littlefield, many believing he knew more about this affair than he had told and that if the large reward had not been offered the matter would never have come to light.

I remember when I came out of the court room I went to a dining room, situated where Young's Hotel now is, to get a lunch. The large room was full of excited men talking about the trial, all apparently of one mind as to what the verdict should and would be. Some bets were offered on the verdict in favor of acquittal, but there were no takers.

The court pronounced the death penalty upon the accused, which was to be carried into execution in the following August. During the interval before the execution every possible effort was made to save the professor. Exceptions taken at the trial were brought before the court, but were not allowed, and a strong, but unavailing attempt was made to have the verdict set aside and a new trial granted. Then the governor was besieged to grant a pardon or to change the sentence to imprisonment, but these efforts were unsuccessful and the sentence was carried into effect.

Finally the accused made a confession fully sustaining the court and jury in their judgment and practically settling the public mind on the matter. But for a long time doubts of his being really executed were expressed and such statements appeared occasionally in the newspapers. Soon after his execution his family went to Fayal in the Azores to reside, and never returned to this

country. At least, if they came back, it was not known.

This was the end of the most sensational case ever tried in this state. Janitor Littlefield, after receiving from Mr. Shaw the amount offered as a reward, at the close of the trial, resigned his position at the college and left the city, locating on a farm in New Hampshire, where he remained, dying a few years ago.

The year 1851 brought no events to the surface worthy of note or remembrance. The political situation in the country was more quiet. Occasionally a slave hunter from the South put in an appearance, stirring up the people somewhat, but the underground railroad being in good working order he did not in many instances find his victim. The strong and conservative administration of Fillmore, with Webster as secretary of state, had a good effect on the country and business was fairly good and steady, and the political excitement over the Compromise measures of 1850 was fast subsiding, although it was later renewed by fresh aggressions of the slave power.

CHAPTER IX.

CAMPAIGN OF 1852.— DEMOCRATIC BARBECUE AT HILLSBORO, N. H.

The Free Soil party, through dissensions in the party management, had lost ground and many of its adherents in the campaign of 1848 had returned to the old parties from whence they came. This was the condition of politics at the beginning of 1852. The Whig party, being in power, went into the campaign with some vigor and confidence of success. The party was practically united throughout the country and met in convention in June at Baltimore with a full representation.

The friends of Fillmore were earnest for his nomination. Daniel Webster still clung to the hope of the presidency, and his friends adhered to him to the last. His great competitor, Henry Clay, had just died at Washington without attaining his life-long ambition, leaving Mr. Webster the last of his former rivals in the field. But availability was still a prominent factor. It had served the party well in the past and its friends were numerous. A successful general had brought them victory in the previous campaign and another general was in the field for the nomination—one who stood at the head of the army, whose deeds had given him a prestige over every other army officer in the country as a military man, whose renown was world-wide—Lieutenant-General Scott. Besides being beyond ques-

tion a good Whig he was the man for the occasion and could be elected without doubt.

Upon this record he went into the convention with a lead and, after many ballots, succeeded in obtaining a majority and was declared the nominee. If the friends of Webster had at any time gone over to Fillmore he would have received the prize; but the urgency of Mr. Webster prevented the change and Scott triumphed.

Mr. Webster, disappointed at this result, refused to endorse the candidate, and soon after, with numbers of his friends throughout the country, came out for the Democratic candidate. Among these were many of Fillmore's adherents also.

The nomination of Scott did not altogether meet the hearty endorsement of the Whigs, but the country very generally responded to it favorably and the party organization went into the contest sanguine of success. The feeling here in Massachusetts, among the rank and file of the party, was of the utmost confidence, and in their press and everywhere they declared that the opposition could nominate no man able to beat Scott.

The Democrats met in convention in June at Baltimore, every state being represented. The convention, though not in all matters entirely harmonious, succeeded in making a platform and adopting the two thirds rule, and after many ballots nominated Franklin Pierce of New Hampshire. To the country in general this was quite unexpected, as he had not been named with any prominence or expectation of success. General Cass and James Buchanan were

the two most prominently mentioned candidates, but they were unable, either of them, to get the required two-thirds, and Pierce was consequently taken up as a compromise candidate.

This nomination was a surprise and did not at first give confidence of success, but soon the tide began to set in for Pierce and his campaign began with much enthusiasm in all parts of the country.

The Free Soil party met at Pittsburg, in August, with a smaller number than at the convention in Buffalo, in 1848, and much less enthusiasm. John P. Hale of New Hampshire was the nominee, so that the old Granite state was honored with two of the candidates. John A. Julian of Michigan received the second place on the ticket. This was a truly representative ticket, both being old anti-slavery men.

The campaign opened pretty lively, and in the start Scott had or appeared to have the inside, as it was felt that his great reputation as a soldier placed him far in advance of the other candidates. But he was unfortunate as a letter-writer. His letter accepting the nomination was unsatisfactory, as it attempted to satisfy all sides, but failed to satisfy the public in general. Some opposition to him appeared in his party in various parts of the country and Mr. Fillmore and Mr. Webster received nominations in several localities. With this condition of the Whig campaign in the beginning, somewhat chilling the enthusiasm for their candidate, the Democratic candidate appeared to gain favor and the hopes of the party were much encouraged. His personality was much in his favor. He made friends every-

where by his very genial and polished manners, and his record in congress and in the Mexican war was favorable to him. Then again, the fact that he was born and reared in the old Granite state, of the old Jackson Democracy, gave him much prestige among Democrats everywhere, and thousands of them returned to the party from the Free Soil party of 1848, believing he would carry out the Jackson policy of former times and bring peace to the country on the slavery question by a firm, consistent course, checking the extreme elements of the South and the radical course of the anti-slavery element of the North.

Confidence in this respect grew as the canvass proceeded and made itself felt at the polls, resulting in the overwhelming election of the Democratic ticket, Pierce and King. Mr. King had long been in congress from Alabama and stood high in the South, giving the ticket much strength in that quarter.

The Whig candidate for vice president was William A. Graham of North Carolina, a member of Mr. Fillmore's cabinet and a strong man of conservative tendencies. He had been in congress a number of years and brought to the ticket much ability and confidence.

The campaign was not as exciting as some previous ones, but was conducted in an earnest and temperate manner. I will here mention some of the incidents occurring during the canvass—one in particular, on the Democratic side.

A great meeting of the Democrats was projected, to be held at the birthplace of their candidate, Hillsboro, N. H. A barbecue of large dimensions was a part of the exercises. A large ox, said

to weigh 3,000 pounds, was roasted whole and immense quantities of brown bread, and I think beans were a part of the food offered, though I am not sure as to that. I was present and partook of the ox and brown bread, but do not remember the beans. This event occurred about the middle of September. I then resided in Worcester and was a member of the Granite State club of that city. This club, with a large number of citizens, not only of that city, but from all over the state, went up to this political feast.

I remember our train left Worcester about sunrise on a very warm and beautiful morning, and the number going filled a long train, using every car within reach of the company. There were said to be upward of fifteen or eighteen hundred people. When the train reached Groton, Governor Boutwell and some members of his staff, with other friends, joined us, and received a great ovation. The Democrats of this state had seldom had an opportunity to greet a governor belonging to their party, and they made up on this occasion for lost opportunities. He went as far as Nashua, I understood, and then returned.

The drift toward that mecca of Democracy among the old Granite hills was very great. The railroads were utterly unable to transport the multitudes, and it was nearly noon before we got to Concord. While we were awaiting transportation to Hillsboro, General Pierce came to the depot to meet some friends expected from the South and West. We had, therefore, a good opportunity to see him, and he got a great ovation, which finally re-

solved itself into a reception of large dimensions. It was here that I had an opportunity to be presented and got a good shake of his hand. He was rather tall and of slender build, with erect, military bearing, black hair, standing up somewhat in curls. His very affable and polished manners gave him an elegant appearance. The great crowd went wild with enthusiasm, and his impromptu reception was all he or any one else in his position could desire.

The delay prevented our reaching our destination until nearly the middle of the afternoon, but we found a sufficient portion of the ox and bread remained to replenish our exhausted strength, with plenty of drink to quench our thirst.

I never before saw such a motley crowd. The little village appeared overrun. All New Hampshire and some of this state must have been there. There was nothing in the appearance of the place to indicate that any change had occurred in it since the date of the birth of its distinguished son. Every house looked as though it had stood there at that time. The land was hardly level and was covered with rocks and great boulders. My impression at the time was that General Pierce's friends from the South and West, who were reported to be there, must have gone home thinking their candidate came from pretty humble surroundings. It was certainly thoroughly rural in every way except the railroad, which had just been completed to the town. The town was emphatically representative of rural New Hampshire at this date, and the plan of holding such a political gathering in the state and in this place was

fruitful of good results to the ticket, as it no doubt rendered the state safe for General Pierce, which was very desirable at that time. But the rush to it was beyond calculations and made the trip laborious and disagreeable.

The lateness of our arrival prevented our hearing any of the speaking and I do not now remember the names of any of the speakers who made addresses. The provisions were ample, so that every one who got there had enough to eat and drink.

It was not until evening that the road could take us out of town, and then only to Concord, where we remained all night, finding a sleeping-place on the floor of the hall of the Scott headquarters, tendered for our use. I returned home the next day to find myself rather used up and my enthusiasm somewhat cooled, as a consequence of the heat of the day and the long and exciting journey through noisy crowds. This excursion satisfied my desire for this sort of electioneering and I have since preferred more quiet and better controlled gatherings.

The result of the election was a great surprise to the country, although previous to election day the generally expressed opinion was that the Democratic ticket would prevail. The unfortunate letter-writing of General Scott had an unfavorable effect upon his canvass. Then, too, it was well known that Webster had declared for Pierce and had recommended his friends to vote for him. This carried many of the Webster Whigs over to the Democratic ticket. General Scott carried only four states—two from the North and two from the South, all the rest of the states

going to General Pierce. This result proved a sore disappointment to Scott and his friends, and, as it proved, ended the life of the Whig party as a national organization.

The Free Soil party showed a falling-off from the campaign of 1848 and not long after was engrafted into the new and broader party—the great Republican party of the war.

CHAPTER X.

PIERCE'S ADMINISTRATION. — A LIVELY DEMOCRATIC STATE CONVENTION AT FITCHBURG. — LOUIS KOSSUTH'S VISIT TO AMERICA. — THE KNOW-NOTHING PARTY.

The election of General Pierce was hailed throughout the country as the harbinger of better political conditions, and confidence in his ability and practical knowledge gave assurance of a better understanding between the North and South as to the slavery issue. No president, since Mr. Monroe, ever went into office with more personal and political friends than he.

The Democracy of the North was delighted. One of their representative men was at the head of the government, and they were confident of being recognized as a part of the great Democracy of the land and that President Pierce's course would strengthen the party in all the Northern states as against the aggressive policy of the South. But they were destined to be disappointed.

The president proved to be more of a politician than a statesman, evidently thinking the solid party of the South more important to his administration than the great and loyal Democracy of the North, including his own state, which had sustained him always and truly. His chief advisers were, for the most part, Southern men, but in New England there were Caleb Cushing, a recent recruit to the party, whom he made attorney-general, B. F. Hallett

and Charles G. Green of Boston, who dealt out the patronage, and none but the hardest-shelled "Hunkers" were recognized.

The result of this course was disappointing to the great body of his supporters and was the practical wrecking of the party in this part of the country, leaving to his support only his office-holders and a small contingent known as the Hunker element of his party, and was also the cause of the loss of his own state, which had stood for a long time true to the Democratic standard. In short, he failed to meet the expectations of his friends, and his administration, instead of bringing peace to the country, widened the breach and contributed much to the great conflict which his successor helped to bring upon the country through his imbecility and lack of firmness and broad statesmanship. No honest, intelligent Democrat can look back upon the administration of Franklin Pierce with pride.

During the campaign of this year the Democratic state convention met in this city (then a town). I attended it as a delegate from Worcester. This was my first visit here, and as I remember it then, the change from that time to the present has been very great. Its inhabitants then numbered about five thousand. The old stone station stood where the present elegant one now stands, and when I came out of it and up through the open ground where Depot park now is, no pavements or sidewalks appeared anywhere. The main part of the American House loomed up as the first building. The ell on the eastern side had not then been built. The next building on the same side was the Norcross & Crocker

building, the same as now On the other side, up to Mill street, were one and two-story buildings, which I did not notice sufficiently to describe them. From Mill street up were open spaces. There were one and two-story buildings and dwelling houses on both sides of the street up to where city hall now is. On the whole I thought it a pretty active town from the little I saw of it. I did not look about much as I felt more interest in the convention than in looking over the town. I had at that time no thought of ever becoming a resident of the town.

The great attraction was at the town hall, where the political circus was going on. The town hall was in an unfinished state. The walls were naked, but the floors and stairways were laid and made serviceable for the use of this convention. A large number was present, filling the hall to its utmost capacity, and a more tumultuous gathering never assembled anywhere in my experience, calling itself a convention. Those in this town who are now living and were present will, I think, agree to this statement.

Hon. Nathaniel Wood of this city was president and I am inclined to think he never got into such a hot box before. It must have tried him to the uttermost. There was a scene enacted here, worthy of mention, which will be remembered by those present.

If I remember correctly, the question before the convention was the reference of all resolutions offered to the committee on resolutions without debate. The contention was very strong and noisy and the chairman had great difficulty in keeping sufficient order to permit of his being heard from the platform.

Amidst the uproar B. F. Hallett appeared on the platform nearly in front of the presiding officer. Why he was there was not then understood.

When his action was observed Benjamin F. Butler, pretty well known to everybody then and since, appeared on the platform, coming in an opposite direction, facing Mr. Hallett. The chairman stood just back of, but between them. What was pending could not quite be solved, but matters looked serious, the convention rose in a tumult and bedlam reigned for a few moments.

During this confusion some delegate in the back of the hall, apparently frightened over the situation, shouted out that the hall was unsafe and suggested that the convention leave the place at once. Col. Ivers Phillips, well known as one of the town's prominent and active citizens, immediately arose and in a loud clear voice declared the hall perfectly safe, saying there was no danger and asking the delegates to remain. He said the building was of the most substantial character and no evidence anywhere appeared of weakness. The emphatic way in which this was said caught the ear of the delegates and no move was made to get out.

The performance then going on on the platform between the chairman, Butler and Hallett, was ridiculous, and was ended by the chairman's putting the motion and declaring it carried. Upon this about one hundred and fifty delegates, under the lead of Hallett, left the convention, proceeded to the old town hall and there organized a protesting body for the purpose, probably, of clearing their skirts of any affiliation with Free Soilers, so that no doubt as to their Democracy could arise when

the offices were given out by the expected Pierce administration to the faithful. After the convention was rid of this Hunker element it proceeded quietly and in an orderly manner to transact its business, after which it adjourned.

Other events worthy of notice occurred this year. Henry Clay died at Washington, early in June, in his seventy-sixth year. Born during the dark days of the revolution, coming upon the political stage at an early age, he became one of the great statesmen of the country, and has gone down into history as one of its most illustrious citizens. Daniel Webster died in October of this year in his seventy-first year. So that this year records the death of two of the most remarkable and eminent statesmen this country has ever produced.

Another interesting event took place at this time, the visit of Louis Kossuth and his retinue, exiles from their native land, Hungary, to this land of the free. He and his were martyrs to the cause of liberty, being driven from their homes through the tyranny of the Austrian government, which held dominion over Hungary and against which these patriots had rebelled, trying to free their people from its power. They failed, and to save their lives, came to this country for protection. They were received everywhere with open arms and the people turned out en masse wherever they appeared. The state recognized them as did the national government. The Austrian government took offence at their reception and recognition by this government and put in a decided protest, threatening to withdraw its minister. But this did not frighten Mr. Webster, who was secretary of state.

He stated the position of the government in a clear and decided manner, and Austria concluded not to withdraw their representative. Nearly every city throughout the country invited Kossuth and his party to pay it a visit and a great many had the opportunity to receive them.

The city of Worcester gave them a very hearty reception and it was there that I had an opportunity to see them. It was made a public occasion and people from all over the county came in in great crowds. The military turned out and it was an occasion of a very patriotic character. The governor of the state was represented by members of his staff. I do not remember that he himself was present.

From a platform on the common, near the old city hall, I heard Kossuth make his address. He was short and thick-set, of a military bearing, dressed in the uniform of a general and wearing a soft wool hat, with a broad brim, trimmed with gold lace. This style of hat became very popular, was at once brought into use and was known for a long time as the "Kossuth" hat. It was almost universally worn by old and young, and took the place of the old-time tall tile, which was very largely worn in those days. He did not speak very good English, but by close attention he could be understood. He was quite excitable and enthusiastic, and aroused great enthusiasm. After traveling over the country from one end to the other he returned to the old country, and when the political situation was somewhat bettered, by permission of the government, then in power, he returned to his home. But

most of his aids remained and settled in this country.

The year 1853 brought the Pierce administration into power in every department. Its policy was soon made apparent. The appointments to office were generally from the pro-slavery wing of the party, and it was given out in high quarters that Democrats in any manner affiliating with Free Soilers would not be recognized. Therefore almost at the beginning the line was drawn. No one in the party of broad, liberal views, who had in any way shown a leaning towards anti-slavery opinions, would be considered a Democrat. The result of this policy was indicated by the small Democratic vote cast at the fall election of this year.

At this time the Whigs, as a party, were losing ground in this state; although they succeeded in electing their state ticket, it was the last of their success as a party, and from this time the organization went to pieces. The Free Soil party, through its divisions, was fast falling behind, so that a large mass of the people, disgusted with the old parties, were looking for something new.

About this time it began to be reported that a new party was being organized in various parts of the country, but as it was said to be a secret organization, its working principles were little known, and when any one supposed to be a member was asked about it, the reply would be: "I know nothing." This was so frequently the anwser that the members of the new party were called "Know-Nothings," and generally went by that name. But the name which they themselves chose was "Native Americans." None but pure native

stock were to be admitted. Their principles, as given out, were: Put none but Americans on guard and against foreign influence of every kind. No Roman Catholic could be admitted to the party. In short it was nothing more nor less than an anti-Roman Catholic organization, formed to make war on that church in this country, although this was strongly denied by some of its prominent leaders. Large numbers flocked to it and it soon became a power in politics. A large number of the come-outers from the other parties joined it, and in 1854 it showed its strength at the polls by carrying this state by a large majority, electing its entire ticket and sweeping over the country, carrying many states and bringing many new men forward.

This secret order in politics was distasteful to the average voter and its members were soon more open in their movements and meetings, but from this election the party began to decline. Through the disorganization of the old parties they were able to keep control of this state for three years. All previous attempts to build up a party on this narrow, proscriptive principle had failed, and this party was to go the same way. The mass of the patriotic people of this country did not take kindly to secret oaths and organizations in politics and soon sat down on the party, which, after a brief time, went out of existence, but it brought upon the political stage quite a number of new men and helped up higher some well-known politicians—for instance, Henry Wilson, N. P. Banks and Anson Burlingame, men of mark in the old Free Soil party, who, joining this movement, were recognized. Mr. Wilson

went to the United States senate and Banks and Burlingame to the national house of representatives. Banks was also the first Republican governor of Massachusetts. Henry J. Gardner, who was elected governor three successive years by this party, was an old Whig of no previous political standing, and dropped out of sight after leaving the gubernatorial chair, as did also a number of others of less ability who got high places in the state and nation.

CHAPTER XI.

THE CAMPAIGN OF 1856.—DOUGLAS AND THE CAMPAIGN OF 1860.

The year 1856 brought another presidential campaign. The policy of the Pierce administration was so antagonistic to the free sentiment of the North that the dissolving elements of the old parties found no difficulty in organizing a new party to meet the issue put forth by the administration in power. It began in this year with an organization in every free state, and a national convention was held, which was largely attended from the free states and to some extent from the slave states.

The convention met under favorable conditions and contained many men of high standing and political experience. This was the beginning of the great Republican party, the power of which later on changed the whole attitude of the country in relation to slavery and was the essential means of eradicating it forever from the land and saved the Union for all time, I hope.

This convention nominated General John C. Fremont for president and William L. Dayton of New Jersey for vice president. General Fremont was instrumental in making California a state, and his great ability made it a free state.

The Native American party and what was left of the Whig party met in separate conventions and nominated ex-President Fillmore as their candidate, but neither convention was largely attended.

The Democrats met in convention at Cincinnati, nominating James Buchanan for president and John C. Breckinridge of Kentucky for vice president. The states were all represented, largely by office-holders under the Pierce administration. They, of course, endorsed all Pierce had done, but did not think him available for renomination. The South was in the saddle as usual, and dominated the convention.

This campaign was pretty lively, particularly in the Northern states, where the new party appeared to be largely in the ascendant. The election resulted in the defeat of Fremont. The presence of the third candidate, Fillmore, in the field, gave Buchanan five free states besides all the slave states, except Maryland, and elected him. Thus the pro-slavery Democracy continued in power four years longer. Its pro-slavery policy was so extreme that a large fraction of the party, under the lead of Senator Douglas, took issue on the administration policy, and here began the struggle of the Free Democracy of the North with the ultra pro-slavery program of Mr. Buchanan, which, in the next national campaign, resulted in a division of the Democratic party and bringing about its defeat.

The campaign of 1860 was very exciting and the country was greatly disturbed over the situation. The aggressive pro-slavery spirit of the South, aided by the Buchanan administration in the extension of slavery into the territories, produced an equally determined purpose on the part of the great anti-slavery element in the North to prevent it. This brought on much angry discussion in congress and out, and the conservative people all over the country

were more or less alarmed over the political condition. The Republican party had, through this state of the country, become greatly strengthened and met in convention at Chicago with all the free states fully represented and some delegates from the slave states. It was a great gathering and was composed of many able men of political experience, coming out from the old parties to meet the great issue of slave extension. This was the uppermost question, nothing else was considered. After much disagreement about candidates they succeeded in nominating Abraham Lincoln and Hannibal Hamlin, and took a decided stand against the further extension of slavery into any of the territories of the Union and made it the leading issue.

The Democratic party met in convention at Charleston, S. C. The rule requiring two-thirds of the whole convention to nominate a candidate was adopted. The differences over the slavery question prevented any nomination at this place and the convention adjourned to Baltimore to meet in June. A considerable number of the delegates from the South had left the convention, so that the assembling at Baltimore was left in the control of the friends of Douglas He was the choice of the convention and was made its nominee. The bolters, mostly from the Southern states, but including three prominent men from Massachusetts—Benjamin F. Butler, Caleb Cushing and George B. Loring—met in convention at Baltimore, in the same month, calling itself the National Democratic convention, receiving the full endorsement of Buchanan and his administration, passing resolutions sustaining their radical po-

sition on the extension of slavery and nominated John C. Breckinridge for president. Another convention had been held in the previous month in Baltimore, calling itself the Constitutional Union party, composed of old Whigs, the remnant of the American party and others representing the commercial interests of the country, which had become much disturbed over political affairs. They represented twenty states and placed in nomination two very eminent statesmen—John Bell of Tennessee and Edward Everett of this state. Their platform set forth the great value of the union of the states and urged the full acquiescence in all the compromises and laws, in short, to concede to the South all it demanded.

With these prominent four tickets in the field, the contest began early and was waged with great vigor by all the parties. The Bell-Everett party, as it was called, was very active. Being made up of wealthy men throughout the country they had ample means to make a good fight. They did not expect to elect their candidates by the popular vote, but to so divide the vote that no election by the people would occur, then congress would have to settle the matter. As the Buchanan party held both houses they calculated, in view of the fact of the division of the Democrats, they could effect a compromise and bring about the election of their candidates. This, at the time, appeared quite probable in view of the situation, and was felt by many prominent statesmen to be the outcome of the contest. This party put in much work in this state and, as an important adjunct to their efforts, they mounted a large bell on wheels to be hauled

through the country to be rung at all their great gatherings. This appeared at many places in this state. Business was dull, being more or less affected by the uncertain outlook of the political situation, so that little was done other than conventions, political gatherings and electioneering.

The result was the election of the Republican ticket. This ticket received a large plurality of the votes cast and also a considerable majority of the electoral vote. Mr. Douglas received the next highest of the popular vote, being within half a million of Mr. Lincoln's vote. Breckinridge received a little more than half as many as Douglas, and the Bell-Everett ticket received less than one-half as many as Douglas received. So it will be seen that Douglas represented the great heart of the Democratic party, opposed to the extreme demands of the South and the policy of Buchanan, and, as it appeared later on, by the action of Judge Douglas, were found loyal to the Union and against the encroachments of the slave power.

The result was very gratifying to all lovers of their country, showing as it did a very large preponderence of votes in favor of the maintenance of the Union and the repression of the arrogant Slavery Extension party. The election of Mr. Lincoln was hailed as the beginning of a new era and much rejoicing was had over it, but the position of the South indicated trouble. They would not accept the result and began to take measures to get out of the Union. The president-elect, not being well known throughout the country, did not fully obtain the confidence of the country at first and he entered the White House with some doubt of his

ability to meet the great crisis then appearing imminent; but history has clearly shown him to have been the man for the occasion, and against open and secret enemies his wisdom and firmness prevailed, and he went down into the annals of his country as second only to Washington, the saviour of the Union and the liberator of the slave. Had his well-known policy been continued in the succeeding administration, the restoration of the Union would have been with less friction and at an earlier date, and would have prevented many of the subsequent troubles placed in the way of a complete union of the entire country.

One more fact I will state to the credit of Mr. Douglas and his party—that when the president called for volunteers to aid in saving the Union, Douglas was among the first to call personally on the president to offer himself and his friends to aid the administration in suppressing the uprising then in progress against the Union. This was most opportune and timely, as it placed in the Union ranks the million and more of patriotic Democrats to fight for their country, and thousands of them everywhere went into the armies and did their duty, while the Breckinridge contingent in the North generally remained at home to run their party organization, pass peace resolutions, declare the war a failure and otherwise obstruct Lincoln in his great work of saving the government.

CHAPTER XII.

IMPROVEMENT OF POSTAL FACILITIES.

In concluding these reminiscences at this point, a retrospect of the past, bringing to notice the great changes made during the period covered and down to the present time, within my memory, nearly three-quarters of the present century, may be worthy of consideration, and in the outset may remind my younger readers of the very limited opportunities in my boyhood days to earn an honest penny for spending money. There were no papers to sell, daily papers were not printed outside of Boston, and only a few there. No office boys were needed, no telegraph, telephone or elevator boys were required, and the calling of the bootblack had not acquired a place among the occupations. None of the large number of chances on every hand now seen were thought of in those days. The opportunities for learning a trade or acquiring a business education were limited to a few.

I remember how hard it was to get hold of a cent, so that my spending money was very small in amount. I have not forgotten my running after the old stage coach to get the mail, when the driver threw it off in front of the postoffice, to carry it in for the postmaster to take out the letters and other packages for the townspeople, and then to carry it to the tavern, where the stage stopped to change horses. This brought to me the coveted

cent, which to me then, was a precious coin; but I did not have a monopoly of this business; plenty of competitors were found for the same cent, so that unless I got round pretty lively I failed to get the much desired money. The mail bag was not a very large affair and never very full, so that a pretty small boy could handle it. The mail facilities in those days were quite small as compared with the present in the same town. There did not appear to be much correspondence going on about there, at least there was not much in the bag, excepting on Saturday, when the weekly newspapers taken in the town put in an appearance. I had a good chance to see the contents of the bag and learn the number of letters usually found therein; and this was only three times a week; a daily mail to any place excepting the most populous was not allowed, as it did not pay. The stage came from Boston only three times in the week, a distance of only 25 miles, to my native town of Holliston in Middlesex county. This town was not wholly a farming town; considerable manufacturing for that period was done and, in fact, there were but few towns in the county larger or more active than this town of my birth at this date. It was not the fault of the people that more correspondence was not carried on or more business done through the mails. The rates of postage were very high, almost prohibitive. No prepaid matter was carried in the mails, all postage must be paid by the receiver and not by the sender, so that only a small correspondence was carried on, and this mostly of an urgent business character. The people did not have much spare change, so

could not afford to take letters from the office and pay the rates charged.

I remember very well of the postmaster sending me home from the office to get money to pay for letters sent to my father. If the letter came from New York it took eighteen cents to get it; if from Boston, six cents; Springfield, twelve cents; Washington, twenty-five cents. These were the various rates charged, and no trust either—must have the money to get the letter.

The result of this policy of the government was that many letters and other matter went to the dead letter office, they failing to get anything for doing the business. This condition of the postal accommodations of this country continued without improvement until about 1840, then only by the persistent demands of the people, and then only of an unsatisfactory character. Finally the business interests set up private mail routes, although the law prohibited them, but they successfully carried out this business and compelled congress to change the law and meet the growing business of the country. It was through the efforts of business men to get better and cheaper facilities for communication that the great express business of the country came into existence, and Harnden, Adams and other live men started in a very small way to carry letters and small packages in hand-bags from Boston to New York and other large cities. This was about 1840, but I remember them with their hand-bags in their hands on the way to Boston, and also remember the reports of their contentions with the government over the business of carrying letters and other mailable matter prohibited by law. This was the beginning of

what now is a mighty business, reaching out through the entire business world and found with its offices in all the large and small cities and towns in this country, involving millions of capital to carry on its immense business. This is one of the great industrial developments of the last fifty years. Within this period the tremendous advance made in postal communication and in everything relating to it, brought almost to every man's door, at a cost hardly felt by the poorest person in the community, is most marvelous to us who were living in the first half of the century. Those coming on to the stage of active life within the last half of this century cannot realize the magnitude of the changes that have taken place within the lifetime of those of earlier generations now living.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE OLD MILITIA.

Another incident was brought to my mind a few days ago while viewing our fine military companies as they passed along on Main street. It occurred to me what a difference there was in their appearance as compared with the military of my early life when out on parade. The military establishment of this Commonwealth is now in a high degree of discipline and has a good reputation everywhere, reflecting great credit upon itself and the state, and is looked upon with pride by the people. Its excellent equipment, including their neat serviceable uniforms, all supplied by the state, the personal character and appearance of the men filling these uniforms, when on duty, shows what can be done when properly organized and liberally supported, as is now the case in this state. Through this it is made respectable to be in the ranks of the volunteer militia, which the fostering care of the Commonwealth has made possible. This is as it should be, but what of the military establishment of the olden time, if it can be called such? It was as good as could have been expected under the circumstances, taking into account the aid and support it received from the government. About all the state did was to make laws requiring every able-bodied man from 18 to 45 years of age (unless legally excepted) to do active military duty at least once every year, and if they failed to comply with the law they were subject to a

fine, and imprisonment if not paid. Nothing else was done to build up and strengthen the military arm of the state, unless tents were provided for musters and other articles of the same character. Every man was obliged to equip himself at his own expense and keep his arms in good order for service. It may be that ammunition was furnished at the expense of the state, I am not sure from my recollections of this matter, how much was done by government to supply its soldiers with the necessary implements, but I always understood that but little was done in aid of the militia. The military spirit of that time was fully up to that of the present, taking into account the support it received. There was in almost every town either an infantry or artillery company, and in some of the larger towns more than one. These were all well uniformed, done at their own expense. The government furnished the cannon, but not the muskets and other arms; this I am not sure about as I was not old enough to belong to any of these companies. These were known as the independent uniformed militia of the state, and doing duty in these organizations relieved the young men from training with the un-uniformed militia, but otherwise they were required to perform military duty on the day prescribed by law. This was on the last Wednesday in May. There was much pride taken in these organizations in the towns where they were located and they received some encouragement from the people of their own town. My town had for a long time a fine infantry company and it was always well uniformed and made a good show when on parade. Every young man

that could afford it, or his father afford it for him, joined the uniformed company, preferring to do his military duty in a more respectable manner than the un-uniformed company allowed, so that as long as the law required active military duty, no trouble existed in keeping up full ranks in the independent companies. Training days to us boys were a great event and were looked forward to with great interest and enthusiasm. I remember well with what pride I looked on our company when out on parade and how I longed for the time when I should be old enough to enter its ranks. This training day was a very important event in our country villages, when the patriotic yeomanry uniformed and un-uniformed appeared on the streets of one's peaceful village in martial array. The gay uniforms of our crack light infantry company filled us full up to the brim with the true military spirit and enthusiasm. But the un-uniformed company must not be passed by; they were on hand, duly equipped, as the law required. What a motley crowd they were, of all ages from 18 to 45, short and tall in stature; they were there by compulsion, not from a sense of duty or pride, so they came in all sorts and colors of apparel. This many of them did to show their contempt for the law and to bring the whole system into as much ridicule as possible. They would rig themselves up for the occasion in suits like some of the horribles in a Fourth of July procession of the present day; they would march to the music of fife and two drums, as the law required, one a base drum. Some, not appearing to have a good ear for the music, found it difficult in some instances to keep

step with their neighbor, therefore the marching indicated lack of military spirit or interest in the business, and when drawn up in line for inspection they would present a very comic appearance and would make a good show for a circus. After much effort to get as straight a line as possible the captain would make the inspection required of the arms and equipments of each man, carefully examining the lock of his gun and the flint. In those days percussion caps were unknown, not having been invented, so that the flint was an important article of warfare and must at all times be found in working order. When this inspection was completed they were put through the manual of arms or drilled; this was an interesting performance, not from the perfection of the work, but from the fact that no two men would move or act together at the same moment. The captain would strut up and down before his company, giving his orders in a loud voice, and would sometimes berate them for their lack of military knowledge and spirit in quite sharp language, if not so polite and dignified as the occasion ought to require. It is no wonder the captain got out of patience sometimes, such a motley crowd he had to deal with. When this drilling was through he would get them into marching order, then proceed to the tavern for rest and refreshments, and then it was expected the captain would do the liberal thing and stand treat for the company. This he usually did, but in many cases it proved rather costly business for him, and for the honor of being captain many a man was considerably reduced in his stock of ready cash and got out soon to save himself. These trainings

generally ended with a dance at the tavern, when the young women of the town put in an appearance and took a prominent part, but on too many of these occasions drunken frolics ended the day. It was quite amusing to witness the election of officers. When this occurred every man was warned according to law to be present, so they all put in an appearance. It was all done by ballot and often extended late into the night through their inability to make a choice, but when this was effected the elect was expected to step out in front of the company and express his thanks for the honor conferred, and when one in the ranks was elevated to the position of corporal he was expected to make his obeisance before the company. Much of this was very ludicrous and made a good deal of fun for every one present. I imagine that some of our old men of four-score years and more, now living, can speak from experience on this matter and no doubt can remember training days of their boyhood pretty well.

The militia musters of the early days were not always of a creditable character and were anything but a school for acquiring military knowledge. They were not conducted with much practical knowledge of military affairs. The officers often were men without experience in the science of war, therefore not much was accomplished for which the law required. There were some exceptions, however. When men with experience were at the head of the regiments in the field, something was done for the improvement of the military arm of the government, but as a whole they proved more of a general holiday for the people, as everybody that could

possibly get there went to these musters and many of them ended in drunken rows, greatly lowering the standard of public morality. When a lad and as long as one of these musters were held in my neighborhood I attended them, so I have some recollection of the scenes enacted there. This condition of military affairs continued, if I remember rightly, up to about 1840 or thereabouts, when the law requiring compulsory military duty was repealed, but the military spirit was kept up pretty well by the continuance of the uniformed companies in the more populous part of the state.

CHAPTER XIV.

INTRODUCTION OF STEAM AND ELECTRIC POWER, THE TELEGRAPH, THE TELEPHONE, ETC.

Men of three-score and ten can distinctly remember when steam as power in any form was only a matter of experiment, doubtful as anything possible for any real use. Although as early as about 1830 it was put into use experimentally in locomotion on sea and land in this country and Europe, but as a power in manufacturing establishments it had not been tried, so far as I can remember, in any part of New England. Railroads in the decade from 1830 to '40 came slowly into practical use and favor, and the stage coach gradually went out of general use. It has required upwards of 50 years to develop the mighty power of steam and apply it, and we can now only look with wonder and amazement at the great change brought about through its agency in such a short period of time. We can hardly realize, as it has been so rapid and successful in every particular and with such tremendous results in all relations of our existence.

Another great invention soon followed the introduction of steam, "The Electric Telegraph," first heard of in 1835, but not until 1846 did it come into public use, then under Prof. Morse's system, from Washington to Baltimore, by aid of congress. This was a success, so far as the principle was concerned, and through subsequent inventions and improvements became another

of the great and useful inventions of the first half of the 19th century, now in use in every part of the world in almost every town and village. In 1850 submarine telegraphy was invented and, later on, brought into general use successfully over the entire globe, annihilating time and space, bringing into almost momentary communication peoples of far distant countries. Then, as late as 1876, came the application of the electrical current for the transmission of sound, known as the "Telephone," another remarkable invention whereby conversation can be carried on from house to house, from town to town and through long distances, everywhere now in use as an indispensable factor of our daily life. And then came the recent application of electricity for power, a possible future competitor to steam, as seen in use on our railways and in workshops and factories, as yet undeveloped in extent of power and utility. To witness the passing to and fro of carriages filled with people, propelled by unseen power in our streets, is a wonder alone for the present generation, not heard of or thought of at the beginning of the last half of this century.

All of these great and wonderful discoveries have been made and brought into use within my memory, and when beholding these marvelous realities I am led to ask what may be possible and what will the coming generation see in the new century now at hand. The century now about to end has been prolific of the greatest discoveries for the benefit of mankind, not only of a material and physical nature, but of an intellectual advancement to higher and broader culture in every department of

life. To confirm this I need only to refer back to my boyhood days. I remember well the facilities offered for getting an education, a district school open three months in the winter and a short term in the summer was the limit, kept at the public expense, but the average schooling for boys was even less, mostly in the winter season. No public high school was open anywhere, as the law did not require it. Private schools and academies were kept in the larger towns, and if you desired a higher education they required the payment of term fees and the providing of all the necessary books and other needful stationery at your expense; in every school in this state at that time it was the case and for many years after. The poverty of the people, as compared with now, prevented the fitting for a college education of only a few of the young men, and the higher learning of young women was not thought of.

Colleges and higher institutions of learning were few and hard to reach, so that to compare such a state of society as then existed with the present time, shows the great advance made during the period of my life in this great matter of education of the people—and this improvement is largely the product of the last half of the century.

The young men of today, I think, cannot realize the narrow and limited possibilities for advancement that existed in the first half of this century. The great activities of the present day were unknown then. It was like the slow, steady movement of an ox team, as compared with the rushing, driving and energetic life of ours today. To be

possessed of a million of dollars, as it was said that old John Jacob Astor of New York was, (and he was credited with being the richest man in this country in my boyhood time), was considered a remarkable thing and made him the object of much note, but now to be counted worth a hundred millions causes no great surprise. While business then measured its totals in thousands, it now reckons in millions. Through these great discoveries and inventions of the past 75 years New York knows the state of the market in the entire commercial world daily, when in the early days it required weeks and months to secure it.

Our government at Washington is informed every day in the year of its standing and relation to the remotest governments on the globe.

I might go on and mention without limit the immense strides taken in everything, the vast accumulations of wealth, the unrest and tremendous energy of the people to improve their condition, and the great advance in arts and sciences, in education and intelligence of the masses, all indicating much greater advancement in the future and in the general improvement of mankind everywhere, and children now living will witness greater changes than ever before seen or conceived in any previous age.

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Correction:

Should read—the Venerable Levi Lincoln, whose **father** sat in the Cabinet of President Jefferson.

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